Northern Saskatchewan Social Development Review

Final Report 1998

Seeking alternative directions to developing social climate change for northerners in Saskatchewan, planning for the next millennium.

100-05093/

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April 19, 1999

Minister of Social Services
Honourable Harry Van Mulligan
Room 208 Legislative Building
Regina, SK
S4S 0B3

RE: FINAL NORTHERN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Dear Mr. Van Mulligan,

Please find enclosed a copy of the final edited community consultation report for your review. There have been minor changes to the grammar and structural part of the report.

The Northern Social Development Review was an extensive project jointly undertaken by the Department of Social Services and New North. New North is very pleased with the report and look forward to the implementation of the recommendations.

Thank you for your time and we look forward in working with your department.

Sincerely,

R. Daigneault
New North Social & Justice Coordinator

cc: New North Executive
New North Social Development Committee
Buckley Belanger, MLA Athabasca Constituency
Rick Laliberte, MP
Duncan Fisher, DM Social Services
Paul Wilkinson, Director Community Planning Unit

1 Introduction

Northern Saskatchewan is home to approximately thirty-five thousand residents living in an area roughly the size of a small European country like Germany. The big difference is population: Germany has 80 million people compared to 35,000 people in northern Saskatchewan.

Life for the average northerner is the same each day, a large percentage of the northern population relies on welfare to feed and clothe them. Through a questionnaire, people at the community level were able to tell us that the average social dependency rate hovers up to 70% in the north, with the exception of communities close to resource extraction or with a stable tax base, which is very uncommon. In understanding this high rate of unemployment, leaders have been attempting over the years to put a stop to this and get their people back to work again.

New North in cooperation with the Government of Saskatchewan Department of Social Services agreed to conduct community consultations on social issues in the north.

Project Background:

SANC Services Inc. and its membership conducted these community based social development consultations in northern Saskatchewan. This process was designed to encourage northerners to identify and priorize the key issues affecting them. The recommendations to be devised from this process will further enhance the community's ability to come up with northern-based solutions for future Social Development. At the conclusion of these initial findings, the Social Development Committee and the chairpersons of New North will review the outlined recommendations and talk about solutions to these matters.

Objectives/outputs as follows:

- identify and priorize key issues;
- develop recommendations for dealing with these issues for promoting the participation of northern people in their own community and socio-economic development;
- documentation of these participants in the consultation and evaluations of the process, and;
- draft a final report of the consultations, including recommendations to be submitted to the province that will be used to develop a *memorandum of understanding* between New North and the province.

At the conclusion of this process, it is hoped that Northerners will have more input into the delivery of social services programs in the north. Through this exercise, northerners can and will have a better insight into how programs should be delivered in the future.

In coming with their own solutions to these obstacles and with a framework arrangement through a Memorandum Of Understanding, New North, SANC Services Inc. can begin formal negotiations with appropriate government agencies on this matter.

The government of Saskatchewan is in the midst of establishing a new relationship on northern issues. Premier Roy Romanow announced this process on May 12th, 1997 in Saskatoon.

> *"What we want to do through this process, is to establish a partnership arrangement with northern leaders, we need to combine our efforts to circumvent the problems facing northerners. The government can't neglect these issues any longer and the northern leaders have to be involved in that change."*
>
> *-Premier Roy Romanow - May 12th, 1997.*

New North and Social Services agreed to conduct community consultations on social matters in northern Saskatchewan. The terms of reference for this process are attached with the preliminary report. That review was held this past year. Two individuals, Allan Adam, a communications consultant from Prince Albert, and Marie Kyplain-Chartier from Social Services in Buffalo Narrows did the survey.

In all, close to 80% or 28 of the communities were contacted and interviewed for this process. The survey was conducted in two phases, the first one took place in June and July when community leaders were consulted about the social climate of their community. During the second phase from early September to middle November, community meetings were held on the various issues identified during the first round.

Close to three hundred Dene, Cree, Mechif or non-native northerners were consulted and everyone expressed their viewpoints in this process. Each community had a chance to tell us, what their main concerns were and any ideas they had for social development and change for the north. Many of the points in this report reflect the viewpoints and aspirations of the northern leaders, youth, elders, community service groups and agencies.

All of that information is now compiled into this report as presented.

Thank you, Marsi tcho, and tinigi.

II Executive Summary

The residents of northern Saskatchewan have experienced profound changes in their lives over the last fifty years. Once a proud people, almost 70% of them are now reliant on the government to house, clothe and feed them.

Almost every move they make, every request they have for change involves the government. In every facet of daily life, the government is there.

In over thirty years, the social experiment of the north has seen many twists and turns. Sometimes for the good, sometimes the opposite. There is now so much reliance on the government that people believe more and more that government has to take care of their every need. Government policies promote this dependence. For instance, to qualify for assistance, some young women are having children in order to attain benefits such as housing. People are now generally addicted to the system. The social welfare syndrome has now been passed onto three generations. Each generation believes that it is their right to get welfare assistance. Existing programs such as Saskatchewan Employment Supplement do not include single people and many northern people are young and therefore usually not married. Sometimes even qualifying for government-run programs to get off of welfare is hard for the average person to do.

The attitude of providing for your home has changed, as many people have become dependent upon government. We heard about young able-bodied men resorting to calling the welfare worker for wood in the middle of winter because they can't go get it themselves. It makes one wonder about the social fabric of the north. What has happened to it? Is it acceptable for able-bodied young people to become dependent like this? What happened to the day when people got these things done on their own? The perception is that people on welfare are unable to do anything for themselves. If that's the case, then government has created this situation and people have allowed that to overtake them.

The caseload has not changed much in the past four years, although the numbers may have dropped slightly, it could be because of people moving away or they may be receiving other forms of social programs. Close to 2.1 million dollars is given out each month to welfare recipients across the north, this includes five northern bands and treaty people living off reserve. These bands have an agreement with the Provincial Government to handle case loads for people living off reserve. The bands involved in this agreement are Montreal Lake First Nation which handles caseloads for Weyakwin and Timber Bay, Peter Ballantyne Cree First Nation which handles communities like Southend, Sturgeon Landing, Deschambault Lake, Kinoosao, Pelican Narrows, Sandy Bay, Denare Beach and Creighton. The Lac La Ronge Indian Band handles Brabant Lake and Stanley Mission. The Black Lake Denesuline Nation handles caseloads in Stony Rapids. Hatchet Lake Denesuline First Nation handles Wollaston Lake community members.

On an annual basis Table 1 shows you approximately how many people in northern Saskatchewan use welfare to sustain them:

Table 1

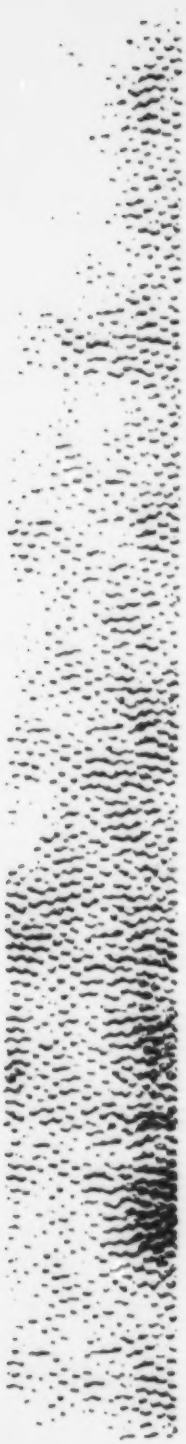
SAP Caseload in Northern Communities October 1994 vs. October 1998

	October 1994			October 1998		
Town Region	Caseload	Bens	Assistance	Caseload	Bens	Assistance
La Ronge	269	747	$224,717.54	174	501	$117,106.25
Pinehouse Lake	170	524	$124,954.51	113	364	$79,085.25
Towns in La Ronge Office	439	1,271	$349,672.05	287	865	$196,191.50
La Ronge Office	566	1,637	$440,328.00	327	967	$218,365.79
Difference	127	366	$90,655.95	40	102	$22,174.29
Creighton	33	71	$19,812.60	31	63	$14,368.66
Sandy Bay	67	174	$38,380.44	50	97	$22,343.05
Towns in Creighton Office	100	245	$58,193.04	81	160	$36,711.71
Creighton Office	125	297	$74,922.30	102	201	$45,990.02
Difference	25	52	$16,729.26	21	41	$9,278.31
La Loche	744	1,687	$485,086.41	711	1,590	$448,355.71
Towns in La Loche Office	744	1,687	$485,086.41	711	1,590	$448,355.71
La Loche Office	745	1,689	$485,441.53	713	1,593	$448,881.03
Difference	1	2	$355.12	2	3	$525.32
Beauval	178	449	$133,158.42	85	215	$50,845.27
Buffalo Narrows	239	528	$146,519.06	157	344	$97,410.87
Ile a la Crosse	312	737	$216,663.19	168	423	$110,865.14
Turnor Lake	52	121	$34,676.46	34	96	$26,361.96
Towns in BN Office	781	1,835	$531,017.13	444	1,078	$285,483.24
Buffalo Narrows Office	833	1,939	$561,767.10	475	1,153	$305,560.24
Difference	52	104	$30,749.97	31	75	$20,077.00
Green Lake	104	257	$73,569.05	80	192	$49,938.70
Canoe Narrows	37	134	$30,989.69	29	112	$24,761.63
Loon Lake	38	115	$35,799.00	20	59	$12,984.82
Meadow Lake	352	844	$251,475.86	330	868	$225,627.94
Towns in ML Office	531	1,350	$391,833.60	459	1,231	$313,313.09
Meadow Lake Office	635	1,602	$460,715.00	528	1,392	$363,085.20
Difference	104	252	$68,881.40	69	161	$49,772.11
Cumberland House	196	493	$108,879.41	186	434	$107,596.12
Towns in Nipawin Office	196	493	$108,879.41	186	434	$107,596.12
Nipawin Office	844	1804	$485,608.54	618	1290	$341,445.47
Difference	648	1,311	$376,729.13	432	856	$233,849.35
Northern Towns Total	2,791	6,881	$1,924,682	2,168	5,358	$1,367,651
Northern Offices Total	3,748	8,968	$2,508,782	2,763	6,596	$1,723,328
Northern Bands	231	596	$157,255	571	1,407	$399,475
Offices + Bands	3,979	9,564	$2,666,038	3,334	8,003	$2,122,802
Difference (Offices, Bands, Towns)	1,188	2,683	$741,356	1,166	2,645	$735,151

In total on an annual basis, the Saskatchewan government hands out in the form of welfare, about twenty five million dollars.[1] From what we observed, this money usually leaves the community the next day. Every month, each community goes through a hub of activity around welfare or child tax benefit days.

The young population of the north is increasing rapidly. Various government departments of health boards are interested in the demographic statistics. "There are now more young people than there are

[1] Source: SAP Caseload in Northern Communities-Oct 1994 vs Oct 1998 Gov't of Sask Document Dec 1998.



older people. The average population increase is about 5.5% between the 1986 and 1991 Census whereas the provincial population decreased by 2% over the same period. There are lower education levels in Northern Saskatchewan. In 1991, one quarter of the northern labor force was unemployed versus 7% of the provincial labor force. Only 41% of northern First Nations and 57% of the non-First Nations northerners participated in the labor force versus 69% of the provincial population."[2] Due to high unemployment, there are many social problems associated with it. Alcoholism, drug and substance abuse is high everywhere. There is a deep sense of hopelessness and listlessness across the north: everything seems to be on the verge of collapse. This creates problems for everyone, no matter if the community has stability. In the body of this report, we will try to reflect the opinions of community members in this regard.

Each year, an estimated one billion dollars of natural resources are extracted from the north creating some job opportunities. The return on investment in the resource extraction sector is high but not much of it stays in the north. As was the case in Uranium City, when the resource runs out, these jobs usually dry up. Over the past couple of years uranium prices have decreased and there is now an over-abundance on the market. Cameco and Cogema, two major mining companies are going to be laying off people over the next two years. In all six hundred jobs will go and with those jobs will go a few million dollars which was needed to sustain the limited northern economy. The general feeling of the north is that, any money derived from the north has to stay in the north. It's because of these missed opportunities that the north is losing out all the time.

> *"Sure the government provides well for us, but they take it all back right away. There's house rent payments, power and other utility payments that they take back right away. Even alcohol, government subsidies allow prices to remain the same in La Loche and La Ronge as it does in Saskatoon. It seems that the government takes care of itself first before thinking about us."*
>
> *La Loche-October 1998*

This review allowed us to explore all of these issues in detail and hear from the people themselves on what they want to see for the future of their young people. It seems that there is extreme hopelessness amongst the northern populace; volunteerism is gone and there is a lot of verbal backstabbing going on everywhere. People want that to change, they want to be independent again, they want to be able to provide for their own families in their own homes. They want to create their own job opportunities. In order to achieve that seemingly insurmountable goal, the province and various northern organizations have created the Northern Development Board. Their task is to come up with a plan to create twelve thousand jobs in northern Saskatchewan in order to bring up the employment rate to the rest of the province. During this review, we heard people talk about self-importance which can be achieved only through healing. There is a need to begin this process now, only then will the north awaken from this freeze of social dependency and stand up again for what is rightfully their right to self-reliance, not government dependency.

As well, the sharing of responsibilities with northern communities through partnerships must be explored immediately. Currently, there is too much government dominance by a few people and northerners feel it is now time to take care of their own affairs. If it means running their own social and housing programs, they want that opportunity. They want to build the north, according to their goals and aspirations.

[2] Source: Northern Health Status Report, July 1, 1998-Northern Health districts, Population Health Unit.

In a recent report on Northern Municipal Strategy, "capacity building" was a highlighted part of it:

> *"Governments must be the facilitators and they can no longer do everything for the northern people, however they must assist the process of development by creating the environment for it. They can create this environment by introducing policies that address northerners needs (not government needs), by assisting northerners to build their own organizational and human resource capacity and by providing financial investment to stimulate the economies of the north.*[3]

New North and other northern leaders now have the task of arguing these issues on behalf of their constituents in order to attain these objectives.

[3] Northern Saskatchewan Socio-Economic Development Plan-New North report, 1998 pp25.

III Background

At one time, the aboriginal populations of the north were people who were self-reliant, the abundance of moose, caribou, fish and traditional vocations of trapping allowed them to be independent.

> *"It was a beautiful day, when we were strong."*
>
> *-Buffalo River Dene Nation-March 1995*

That was the way of the people before the introduction of welfare and a social system to northerners. That change slowly crept into the north at the beginning of the 1960's;

> *"Life changed for everyone back then, we used to build our own homes, hunt, fish and gather our own food, if we needed money, we worked for it, fishing or trapping. People were comfortable with that way of life. We were independent."*
>
> *-Northern Saskatchewan-Summer 1998*

Self-reliance and being on one's own is a figment of the past. Very few people exercise that today. Almost everyone lives in the communities of northern Saskatchewan. They don't live on the land anymore. Commercial fishing and trapping is on the decrease.

Change began for northerners shortly after previous governments ran different social programs in the north. In 1971, the election of the New Democratic Party defeated the Liberal Party, which had been in office since 1964. The Liberal government at that time had been harshly criticized for carrying out the corporate resource development policies begun a decade earlier, to painful extremes. Resource development rip-offs became a major election issue. Welfare policies were also criticized. Repressive measures in the welfare programming by the Liberals included special provisions in the north, such as limiting welfare payments. According to this practice, single men got three-day rations at a time or were ineligible together. Families received food and household allowances only, no rent money or other funds. Conservation Officers administered social allowances in many northern locations. In many instances, welfare served both as a carrot and a stick to induce people to work for very low wages and to barter services of cutting wood for groceries.

During the 1971 provincial election campaign, a critical confrontation took place at Buffalo Narrows. The Metis Society staged a demonstration that quickly escalated into a blockade.

As a result of this incident, the Premier to be was forced into committing to set up a new government department for the north. Though this had not been a campaign promise at the beginning of the election, considerable press of this proposal spread across the province and it soon became an election issue.[4]

Whether it was intentional or not, aboriginal people have been displaced or forced off of the land in order

[4] Social Policy and Social Justice in Northern Saskatchewan-Jim Waring, Publisher Wilfred Laurier University Press, c 1995.

The National Council of Welfare is proposing the following recommendations they would like to see implemented in the various regions of Canada:

- Welfare rates should be high enough to cover the cost of necessities of life, as measured by a market basket of goods and services. Perhaps, the provinces and territories could adopt this approach. Each government would draw up a detailed list of essential goods and services needed each month that is available at the local marketplace. All calculations would be made public, so people outside government could judge for themselves whether the amounts provided by welfare are reasonable.
- Sub-federal governments should not be allowed to disentitle entire groups of people from welfare. Alternatives to welfare should be pursued, but no one should be denied simply because of their age, marital or family status or state of health.
- Another program is a pension-like program for people between the ages of 60-65. The national council has long believed that the Federal spouse's allowance program should be expanded to cover all low-income persons 60-65, not just selected groups of 60-65.

Finally, the National Council of Welfare believes that the federal, provincial and territorial governments will have to redouble their efforts to create more and better jobs for Canadians.

At the same, they should make changes in both their welfare and labor market programs to increase the incentives to work and diminish the disincentives to work.

- All provinces and territories should have earnings exemptions in their welfare programs that allow recipients to enter the work force without suffering huge financial penalties. Under current arrangements in some jurisdictions, welfare recipients lose a dollar for every dollar they earn beyond a token amount.
- All provinces and territories should provide assistance for prescription drugs, dental and eyeglasses to recipients and low-wage workers and their families. Losing medicare coverage is a clear disincentive to work for welfare recipients.

As you can see from the above recommendations from the National Council of Welfare, there is national concern over programs to feed and house people who need them.

The Saskatchewan Perspective

Within months of becoming government in Saskatchewan, the NDP party lost little time before turning to welfare reform after its election of 1991. Changing Directions was a consultation paper, which sharply criticized the previous Conservative Government for inadequate rates, harsh controls, arbitrary case closures and a general undermining of the dignity of people on welfare.* In northern Saskatchewan over 20,000 people rely on welfare. In all or most of the communities, almost everyone relies on the government for one form of help or another. For example with respect to housing, there is no market in 98% of the north, so the government provides it and people have to depend on government for that too. It's a balancing act for everyone involved, people see the dependency and hopelessness involved in not

* National Council of Welfare report, Minister of Public works and gov't services Canada 1997

being able to control their own lives while the government and tax payers accuse northerners of not being able to provide for their own families. Make-work projects only last for a short duration or seasonally and no one seems to be getting ahead.

During the summer of 1993, the Federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development stopped paying welfare to treaty Indians living off the reserve. Saskatchewan expected provincial welfare rolls to increase by 10,000 people. In the end nearly 13,000 new people joined the list between March 1993 and March 1994. Due to other factors, such as changes to Unemployment Insurance which made it more restrictive. Even with that increase, the employment situation improved in 1994. These positive economic conditions continued well into 1995, when the government tabled its first balanced budget in 12 years.

A week before this budget, Ottawa tabled its own budget. The federal government implemented cutbacks in transfer payments for health, post-secondary education, welfare and social services in 1996-97. The province conducted public consultations on this matter.

In January 1996, the province released its findings entitled Redesigning Social Assistance: Preparing for the New Century. This paper pointed to cutbacks in unemployment insurance, welfare and assistance to off-reserve Indians in particular. Even though, the economy was stable, there were still many people who lacked adequate skills to acquire meaningful employment. There was a need for better work incentives in the welfare system, to make jobs more rewarding than social assistance.

The Broad Issues of Welfare Reform

In northern Saskatchewan, there are very few jobs, money and opportunities for anyone to advance themselves. For this reason most of the welfare redesign initiatives do not help. Training programs are not meaningful enough while work programs such as forest fire fighting are short-term job creation. Also communities are not involved in the decision making in how these programs are delivered. The process often involves creating meaningless jobs and people quickly resort back to social assistance once the program lapses. Even if people move out of the north and into the southern cities, they usually end up on welfare where they are no further ahead than what they left behind.

Studies in the United States show that "Workfare" may save governments a bit of money, but its primary concern is converting large numbers of poor people into employment for poor, low paying jobs. This creates problems as well, especially in an area where there are few jobs. On the one hand, it seems to make sense to encourage welfare recipients to enter the job market. On the other hand, it seems counter-productive to classify more and more welfare recipients as employable at a time when the work force is unable to absorb most of the recipients who were previously considered employable.

During the 1990s, we saw many cuts to the social safety system across Canada. Also the spending power of the average welfare recipient has dropped considerably during that time but there have been no increases in welfare rates. Especially in northern Saskatchewan, the price of the average grocery basket has gone up. However, the rates have not adequately reflected those increases.

One comment we heard in the consultations was the hardening of the welfare system towards the people

it was set up to serve. "often the welfare workers are less sociable and not concerned about our feelings." was a comment we heard. Accusations of welfare fraud and abuse are common statements heard all the time. People are telling on each other and creating a great sense of mistrust between each other.

Since the advent of social programs to northerners, life seems to be going backwards for the average welfare recipient.

> *"All in all, the 1990's were a period of constant change in provincial and territorial welfare programs. Welfare changed more in the last few years than it had in all the years since the start of the Canada Assistance Plan in 1966. Sadly, some of the changes seemed designed to roll the calendar back to the 1950's instead of ahead into the new millennium."*[8]

People in northern Saskatchewan are on the verge of social change. they've been too involved in a system that is foreign to them which controls their lives. They now want to begin a process of revitalization of their lives. They believe it can only be done, if they do it themselves. Social development is just around the corner and northerners had a chance to speak about it during our community consultations. Will the road into the future be brighter for them?

[8] Welfare in Canada-National Council of Welfare-Minister of Public Works and Government Services 1997 pp117

Phase One

In this phase, we contacted and set up meetings with the various northern leaders. Through this, we were able to identify what were the main issues of concern in their community and the north in general. Through a detailed questionnaire, we were able to identify these issues. Alcohol, drug abuse and family violence are very high on the list. This all stems from a lack of activity which is related to unemployment and lack of self-opportunities.

Housing was also an extreme issue on the list of concerns. There is a shortage of adequate housing in the north.

The main issue of concern is the north is what to do with the unhealthy conditions of people in the north.

The issue of healing is becoming a big thing in the north. There is a need to define from the northern perspective what this is going to involve and hence our preliminary study made recommendations in this area. If people are healing, then other tasks such as getting back on their feet will be a lot easier. Over and over we heard that this has to take place, people are fed up with the current system of being dependent on welfare and not really seeing any hope in the future. They point to the fact that this is not just a government problem but a northern one as well. The people themselves will have to move towards change according to their wishes and aspirations. The first phase identified a process for getting around that impasse. Our proposal for three Community Development Workers was a possible avenue to begin the process of revitalization of the average northern community. These individuals would work with communities and help identify from the community's standpoint what they believe their community development goals will be. That proposal is now in the hands of the government and we are awaiting government's response.

In drafting up the preliminary report, we were able to identify from the northerners, what they believe are the main issues which affect them on a day to day basis. They have said they want to see change for the better and they don't want to see this continued reliance on government for handouts any longer. (However they have said that a certain segment of the population will always be reliant on a social safety net system, regardless of the circumstances in the north.)

The north is relatively deprived of opportunities such as jobs, training opportunities and other related interests. The north is on a verge of social upheaval; change is necessary in order for healing of any kind to proceed.

Phase One gave us an opportunity to view first hand, the obstacles that northern leaders encounter on a daily basis and to understand why there is a sense of such hopelessness.

Phase Two

After the Preliminary Report was completed at the end of August, we prepared our work plan for the consultations in the communities. This was a task that seemed insurmountable giving the size and scope of the north. The weather was conducive to extended highway and air travel this time. During the summer round, we had to deal with forest fires and hot weather. A couple of times we had to postpone meetings until the following week.

The fall season in northern Saskatchewan is a beautiful time of the year, the leaves begin turning colours by the middle of September and the mornings are crisp with the frost air.

These were the type of conditions that prevailed for the better part of this round. Closer to the end of the meetings, we dealt with snow and sleet by mid November.

Our intent during the second phase was to hear from the local people themselves about their thoughts and ideas in this process. What are their concerns? What would they like to see in the area of social change and how would they like to be involved in those changes? These questions were raised and answered.

Here is an idea of what usually transpired at a typical northern meeting. We sent notices out in advance of the meeting indicating our intentions to hold meetings there. Missinippi Broadcasting Coorporation Radio out of La Ronge broadcast public service announcements or local TV stations. The community helped us identify a suitable location to host the meeting and they took care of arrangements for us.

Upon arriving in the community, we checked into the local community office to reaffirm our meeting time and place. Once that was done, we had a chance to see some of local sights or to visit with people. The meetings were slated for the evenings and ran from 1 hour to 4 hours, depending on how many people wanted to take part. The usual format of the meeting was as follows;

Opening prayer if they wanted it. Introductions. Brief opening statements by local community leaders and opening remarks by Allan and Marie.

Once that was done, the meetings usually began with an overview of this process and the results of the preliminary findings and recommendations.

After that, we opened the floor for further comments and discussion around the issues. Detailed notes were compiled of the discussion and all proceedings were taped. At the conclusion, we had closing comments and proceeded to the next meeting with the same format. We found that this worked really well, and if people wanted to, we spoke in their languages of Cree, Mechif or Dene. People preferred to speak in English and that was the case for 95% of our

meetings. All in all, while the numbers were not high, the comments of the participants who attended were memorable and informative.

We heard many issues of concern to northerners during this process. Like the comments of their leaders during the first round, we heard about concerns over the lack of jobs, high unemployment, lack of training opportunities, family violence, youth crime, high teen pregnancy rate, alcohol and drug abuse and more.

Housing and the lack of affordable housing is a big concern right across the north, with the exception of Uranium City where there is an abundance of run down homes abandoned when the mine shut down in the early 1980's. Generally, the comments were similar right across the north:

> *"We need jobs, not government handouts, we need better opportunities, we need housing, we need good training programs with foreseeable results, we need business to invest in the north, we need to support our own leaders, not put them down. We need to begin healing and our leaders need to speak more positively, not negatively all the time, it depresses us, they need to speak about a brighter future."*

There was also opportunity for us to share relevant information between communities about happenings around the north. For example, in Creighton, we heard about a program designed to encourage young people to build up self esteem called: "Virtues 2000 & Beyond, Bringing the Best out of our Children and our Community." (See information in appendices.)

Despite the seemingly hopeless state of the north, things can't get any worse than they are today. There is now a sense of resurgence. Generally the hopeless feelings are beginning to look up and people are talking about improvements for the north. Change is just around the corner. Independence and shared responsibilities in government services are the going trends in different regions of Canada. The general consensus is that, people don't want the government to do everything for them. They can do a lot of things on their own. People don't want more welfare, just more opportunities such as meaningful jobs, training and better strategic development plans for the future.

V Community findings and priority recommendations

During our community visits, we were able to contact and go to 28 communities in total. Some of the remote and smaller communities were missed unintentionally due to time constraints, or due to lack of interest in government surveys.

There are 35 communities who are a part of the New North Organization. The 21 First Nations of the Prince Albert Grand Council and Meadow Lake Tribal Council make up the rest. In all, close to thirty-five thousand people live in the north, with a majority of them being of aboriginal decent.

The lack of a local sustainable economic base causes extreme hardship in the outflow of money and capital to a central capital economic base. Almost every dollar spent in the north leaves the next day. An example is child benefits, which arrive on the twentieth day of each month. On average this is how it is spent. Over half of the money goes into buying daily sustenance needs such as food and other staples. Incidentals such as bills and other payments take up close to a quarter of this and entertainment such as bingo's also takes a big chunk.

"and many people travel to Casinos in Prince Albert and North Battleford where this income is expended. Are kids getting enough to eat?"

-La Ronge & Buffalo Narrows, July 1998

So, it's like a feast and famine system, it has it's peaks and down times. Every community runs into these patterns every month. Almost every dollar leaves the community as quickly as it comes in. The high cost of living plays a big factor as well. There is basically no extra income in a society where dependency rates are as they are in the north. In order to have a self-sustaining and viable economic base, there needs to be better systems that will keep the money in the north, it's hard for people to save any money.

In doing this work, we were able to identify many common issues and concerns from the community perspective as to how they would like to see change for their future generations.

By identifying and summarizing the key issues, we've been able to put them into this outline of issuses and recommendations.

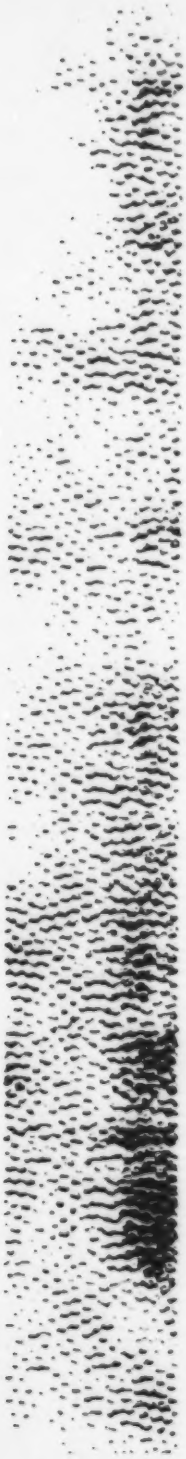
SUMMARY OF ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS IDENTIFIED IN COMMUNITY PROFILES

I DELIVERY OF SERVICES

Issues	Recommendations
1. There are language and cultural barriers between many DSS workers and the residents of northern communities. Often workers have a paternalistic attitude and do not treat the residents of northern communities with compassion and respect so that there is mistrust of workers. Also, where workers only visit communities on an occasional basis. DSS services have low visibility and are provided at a low level, which does not meet people's needs.	• A protocol must be developed for the hiring of northern social workers to deliver the programs. • Local delivery of programs is desired. There should be community based workers to provide services in all communities. • In smaller communities workers may be employed part-time or workers may be shared between government departments to provide a communication link to basic services. • Where it is not possible to hire locally, the Department of Social Services must ensure that all workers are respectful and compassionate in their attitudes to behaviour. • Cross-cultural sensitivity workshops should be held for all employees. • Workers should spend time in the communities on a more regular basis. • Workers must speak the language of the community. • DSS should provide appropriate support to social workers to ensure that their mental and social well-being is maintained.
2. Some communities are served by more than one administrative centre. Also, some communities are not served by the most appropriate administrative centre. (i.e. Turner Lake should be served from La Loche).	• Some communities prefer to be served from only one administrative centre. Services provided to communities should be reviewed to ensure that they are being provided from the most appropriate location.

I DELIVERY OF SERVICES (con't)

Issues	Recommendations
3. Many community members are unaware of and or do not understand government policies, programs and services. This is true not only of the new welfare programs but of existing ones as well.	• Workshops need to be conducted at the community level to explain the services that are available and to create a wider community awareness.
4. DSS programs are very limited and operate under a very narrow mandate (i.e. concern with the health and safety of the child).	• DSS policies and programs must take into consideration the goals and aspirations of the community as well. The DSS mandate must be broadened to include the health and safety of the family and community, including a community healing approach.
5. The communication and coordination between service delivery agencies is inadequate. (i.e. policing and social services).	• Community-based inter-agency structures and inter-agency community resource teams must be developed. • Ensure that government departments and non-government agencies work together to assist communities to achieve their objectives. • Workers need to come to the communities on a regular basis and to be more visible in the community. • Also, community-based workers are needed.



6. Services provided to non-treaty people are not equal to those provided on the reserve. The programs are too far away and the response time is poor.	• Provincial programs must be reviewed and changed to ensure equity. Non-reserve communities should have the opportunity to participate in joint federal provincial programs that are available on reserves. (i.e. Indian Child Family Services agencies and joint welfare delivery systems)
7. Parents are afraid to discipline their children because they fear they may be accused of abuse by DSS, schools and/or police.	• Clarification of the difference between discipline and abuse is needed. Parents and communities want to be involved in developing their own discipline guidelines and procedures.

II RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Issues	Recommendations
1. Residents of northern communities feel that their voices are not heard; that they have little or no control of the government policies and programs that impact their lives on a daily basis. In some cases, inappropriate government policy affects them in ways that distort their values and morals. In other situations, government policies and regulations put barriers in the way of community progress. Current government policies are not working. They do not help people become self-reliant but reinforces and maintains dependence.	• Communities must have greater opportunity for input, involvement in decision-making and responsibility for policies, regulations and the delivery of programs. • Policies, regulations and programs must be reviewed and changed to reflect northern conditions. (i.e. policies for foster and community homes are inappropriate). • Genuine partnerships need to be created between communities and government in the delivery of programs. • The option of community control and delivery of some programs should be examined. • Community-based mechanisms should be established to provide direction to government on the delivery of services (i.e. Family Review Panel and local Welfare Boards). • Communities must be involved jointly with the government in planning for future development.

Issues	Recommendations
1. Traditional values and goals have been lost to some extent and must be revived. Even community leaders do not always set a good example and must go through a process of healing in order to bring their communities together. Also there is jealousy between communities. Healing is necessary before people will be able to take responsibility for initiating change and working together.	• A healthy model of community development/healing must be developed. • Northern communities request DSS to provide resources to enable them to employ Community Development Coordinators to work with communities to prioritize social development issues and to initiate community-based healing processes. • These Community Development Workers will assist communities to promote and implement a community healing model. • Communities will develop short and long term goals and will encourage volunteers and others to become more involved in their community. • Elders must be encouraged to become involved. • Partnerships with all agencies will be encouraged. • DSS is requested to provide resources to support healing and wellness through a northern healing lodge incorporating the four elements: spiritual, emotional, mental and physical. • Community level support groups must be established.

IV ADDICTIONS

Issues	Recommendations
1. Northern Communities agree that a crisis exists in terms of drug, alcohol and gambling abuse. These addictions use up family income and result in family violence and neglect.	• Increased training and employment opportunities will help to reduce addictive behaviour. • The Department of Social Services should make available appropriate resources so that communities can conduct community awareness workshops in such areas as family violence, alcohol and drug abuse, teen pregnancy, etc. • The Department of Social Services should take the initiative to work with communities to establish community resource teams to provide counselling and support programs. These teams could be made up of both agency staff and knowledgeable community members.

V CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Issues	Recommendations
1. Children are apprehended without any community input and often placed in foster homes outside their communities. This dislocation often has negative long-term effects.	• Children must be kept in their own communities and with their own extended families if at all possible. • The Department of Social Services should immediately take steps to develop foster, community and therapeutic homes at the community level as required. • The Department of Social Services must set up Family Review Panels to allow communities to have a say in the standards that are applied and to provide policy direction for dealing with families in that specific community. • The Department of Social Services should work with northern communities to develop protocols with respect to the apprehension, placement and return of children.

	• The Department of Social Services should provide resources for in-home support services for families to prevent apprehensions.
2. DSS is able to provide support to children in foster homes but does not do this for kin and extended family. In many cases extended family members require this financial assistance in order to be able to care for the child.	• Policy changes should be made by the Department of Social Services to ensure that the foster allowance goes with the child so that kin will receive the foster allowance which will assist them to raise the child (i.e. grandparents raising grandchildren). This will recognize the extended family as the most appropriate setting for fostering.
3. For a variety of reasons it is difficult to find enough aboriginal foster homes. Policies and standards which regulate foster, community and therapeutic homes do not take into account the northern situation.	• The Department of Social Services should review foster care guidelines because many northern homes do not qualify. • Northern models of foster care must be developed and DSS policies and standards and adjusted to bring them in line with the northern situation. • The Department of Social Services should establish a campaign to recruit aboriginal foster homes.
4. There is a need for specialized services, such as an assessment and stabilization service in the north.	• Establish a northern assessment and stabilization service with programming based on northern needs and aspirations.
5. Children should not be placed in non-aboriginal families for extended periods of time.	• The Department of Social Services policy should ensure that aboriginal children are placed in linguistically and culturally appropriate settings.
6. The family service mandate is limited to protection of the child and does not include counselling.	• The Department of Social Services should review the current mandate of DSS workers to ensure that their job role includes counselling and the promotion of family and community healing.

7. Many communities do not have Community Based Organizations to provide community-directed services.	• The Department of Social Services should provide financial resources to communities to establish Community Based Organizations to provide themselves with necessary services (i.e. child specialist, etc.)
8. The child care and protection services available off-reserve are almost non-existent.	• The Department of Social Services workers and/or resources for community-directed workers must be based at the community level to provide preventative rather than just crisis-based services.
9. There is a different standard between the financial resources available to support children in foster homes and that available in their own homes. This sets up expectations that cannot be maintained when the child comes home.	• The Department of Social Services should establish a standard for foster homes which is similar to that of northern families.

VI YOUTH SERVICES

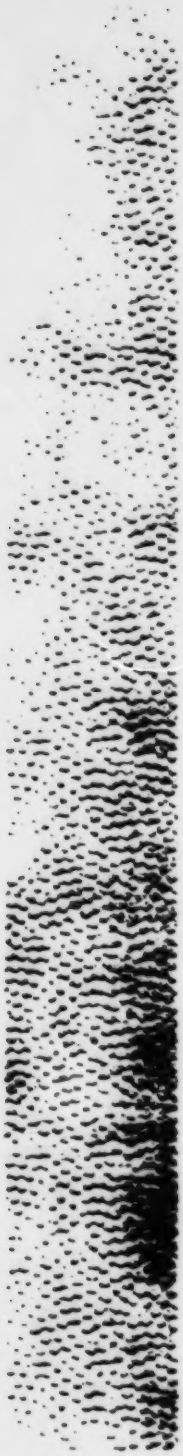
Issues	Recommendations

1. Youth seem to have lost their aboriginal values. Youth addiction and crime are on the increase. Parents are increasingly having difficulty providing direction to their youth.	• The Department of Social Services should review how it currently works with other government departments to ensure that resources are available system-wide, to provide the following services:
	  • locally-based recreation workers, programs and counselling;
	  • more training and employment opportunities;
	  • community justice initiatives;
	  • northern, culturally appropriate youth healing lodges.
	• Parents and elders must become more involved with their youth.

2. Teen pregnancy is increasing among young women, some of whom are only children.	• The Department of Social Services and Northern Health Boards should implement awareness, sex education and healing workshops and counselling for both young women and men. • The Department of Social Services and northern communities should work together to develop a campaign to discourage teen pregnancy. • The Department of Social Services should implement pre-natal, post-natal and nutrition programs to ensure the well-being of mothers and children.

VII SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Issues	Recommendations
1. The cost of living is too high for the SAP allowance that is available. This is particularly true of persons living in remote communities where transportation costs inflate the price of food. The low rates force people into negative behaviours such as bootlegging and pushing drugs.	• The Department of Social Services should take the initiative to establish a food subsidy to equalize food costs between northern communities and southern communities (ie. cost of liquor). • The Department of Social Services should review the SAP allowance for single parents to ensure that it is adequate in view of the higher northern cost of living.
2. Northerners feel that they have little control over the policies and programs that affect them. This has resulted in a dependency which leads to destructive behaviours such as violence and alcohol addiction.	• The Department of Social Services should work with communities to establish community-based mechanisms such as local welfare boards, to provide direction and advice to DSS social workers, and to deal with complaints.
3. It is both unfair and unreasonable that Northern Health Boards do not cover return travel for persons who have had to travel south for emergency medical reasons.	• The Department of Social Services should work with Northern Health Boards to ensure coverage of return medical travel costs.



4. Current meal allowances provided by the Department of Social Services are inadequate.	• The Department of Social Services should revise and change meal allowances for medical travel to the same level as foster rates.
5. The disabled and the elderly are not able to live on the pensions and allowances provided.	• The Department of Social Services and other government department should review allowance levels to ensure adequacy in relation to the higher northern cost of living.
6. Currently the incentive systems in northern Saskatchewan create dependence on welfare, since there is little opportunity for employment. In some cases people are encouraged to go on welfare to qualify for New Careers training opportunities.	• The Department of Social Services must ensure that welfare policies encourage meaningful training and employment. • The Department of Social Services Policies must be drastically changed to support self-reliant behaviour so that northern people who make part of their living off the land can use SAP as a supplement. • The Department of Social Services policies should support and encourage people to do work which will benefit the whole community and especially elders and single parents. (i.e. fishing, wood gathering). • The Department of Social Services should make the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement available to single persons to provide incentives to seek full or part-time employment.
7. The Department of Social Services policies and regulations regarding overpayments and what is considered income don't work and create hardship for many northerners.	• The Department of Social Services should review SAP regulations in cooperation with communities with regard to what must be considered income (ie. money from income tax refunds, trapping, etc.).

Issues	Recommendations

1. The destruction of the aboriginal way of life and means of making a living has resulted in externally developed and controlled programs which have taken away responsibility and created dependency. To reverse this pattern, communities need the opportunity to participate and contribute to their own development and healing.	• Community-based workers (who live in the community) are needed to provide appropriate services and promote healing initiatives. DSS should review the feasibility of sharing staff with other government department to make this possible.
	• Mechanisms such as a Family Review Panel and local Welfare Boards are needed to allow local input.
	• The Department of Social Services together with other departments and agencies should provide resources for services at the community level as follows:
	  • northern healing lodge, elder care facilities, nutritional programs, home care, foster community homes, headstart, daycare, etc.
	  • Programs must be based on community values and strengths and holistic approaches to healing.
	  • Community members must be trained to become community facilitators, healers and leaders.
	  • Community-controlled structures such as community health and social justice committees and community justice committees must be developed.
	  • Community forums and workshops will need to be held to find solutions to issues such as alcohol abuse, family violence and teenage pregnancy.

IX FAMILY ISSUES

Issues	Recommendations

1. There is a high degree of family breakdown and family violence.	• The Department of Social Services should provide resources to establish northern safe homes and shelters.
	• The Department of Social Services should provide resources for the following:
	  • Programs for both victims and batterers.
	  • Prevention and awareness programs which promote family values to emphasize the importance of involvement with one's children.
	  • Culturally appropriate parenting programs which include budgeting and home making skills.

X ELDERS

Issues	Recommendations
1. The need to care for elders is crucial. They have essential living skills to pass on from generation to generation. They can only do this if they remain in northern communities and are not moved to southern institutions where they often die of loneliness.	• The Department of Social Services should work with other departments to ensure that Elder care facilities and programs are established in northern communities. • Some way must be found to involve Elders in teaching young people traditional ways.

2. The "Y" card system provides inadequate medical coverage. Old Age pensions are too small to cover northern expenses.	• The Department of Social Services should work with Northern Health Boards and the federal government to ensure that:
	  • Elders have access to adequate medical coverage;
	  • elders have some means to supplement Old Age Pension (ie. increase Saskatchewan Income Plan allowance).
	• Elders who qualify for SIP should also qualify for "Y" card.

XI DISABILITIES

Issues	Recommendations
1. The services available to physically and mentally challenged people in the North are inadequate.	• The Department of Social Services should review the rates for a persons with disabilities to reflect northern cost of living factors and special needs. • The Department of Social Services in conjunction with the Department of Health and the Northern Health Boards are requested to review Community Living services available to northerners who are mentally and physically challenged and develop programs to meet these needs.

XII JURISDICTIONAL BARRIERS

Issues	Recommendations
1. First Nations and Metis organizations along with provincial and federal government departments all deliver programs to northerners. This delivery process means that services are often delivered unequally to communities which are adjacent to each other. This creates rifts and jealousies in communities and even between families. For example, a First Nation's community may receive Child and Family Services, while across the road these services are not available to a non-reserve community. These jurisdictional barriers block community cooperation and shared programs. Some of the areas affected are policing, Social Assistance, Child and Family Services, access to land and taxes.	• Protocol agreements are required between federal and provincial governments, as well as between First Nations, Metis and Municipal organizations. Negotiations on protocols must begin immediately. • Negotiations should take place between First Nations bands and adjacent municipalities to deliver develop partnerships for joint delivery of Child Welfare and Social Assistance services. • Negotiations between First Nations and adjacent municipalities to establish joint local governments should be considered. • The Department of Social Services should take the initiative to work with other government departments to ensure that there is relative equality between the federal and provincial rates for such things as Social Assistance, Child Welfare services and medical travel.

2. Communities are concerned that provincial liquor and gaming policies do not recognize and over-ride community preferences and decisions.	• The provincial government should review and revise current liquor and gaming policies with input from northerners.
3. There is a need to improve the working relationships between communities and government and as well to improve the communication between government agencies such as Social Services and the RCMP.	• Establish community groups such as community police boards and family review panels which provide advice to government. • Establish interagency working groups.
4. Government regulations often deter people who want to live off the land.	• Government regulations must be reviewed to allow for change to provide municipalities with more control over the land in traditional land use areas.

XIII POST SECONDARY EDUCATION & TRAINING

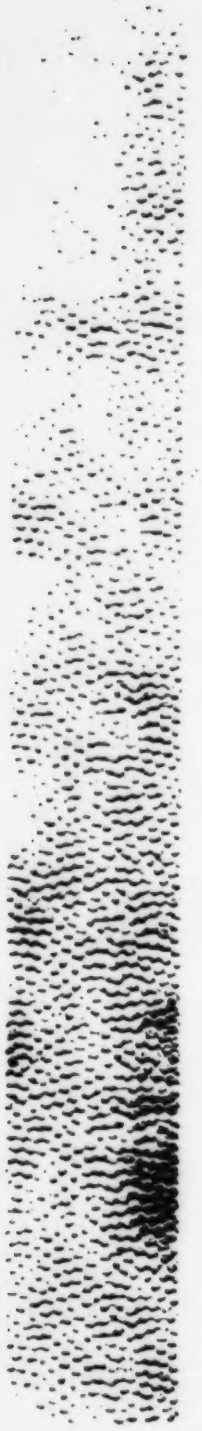
Issues	Recommendations
1. Community residents feel that they have little input into the New Careers programs that take place in their communities. They often do not even know about the programs available.	• Post-Secondary Education must review and revise policies to allow for partnerships with communities and joint involvement in the delivery of community programs. Post-Secondary programs must become more flexible and programs must reflect community needs.

2. Often the training which takes place does not lead to jobs or help people get off welfare, some areas like the Athabasca Basin have been overlooked when it comes to training programs.	• Comprehensive training and employment strategies must be developed so that people will be able to access meaningful employment.
	• Post Secondary Education should provide northern people with training to meet community needs as follows:
	  • train people to maintain community facilities;
	  • train people to provide elder care and safe homes;
	  • train people to be facilitators with skills for community leadership;

	• train people for opportunities for employment in the human service sector. • Post Secondary Education should provide northerners with training for public sector jobs.
3. Some communities lack high schools and it is difficult for students to adapt to life on the outside.	• Post Secondary Education & Training should ensure that communities have access to some type of high school program (ie. correspondence, distance education, use of the internet, etc). • Bridging programs to assist young people to adjust to post secondary programs on the outside are needed.
4. New Careers programs encourage young people to seek social assistance in order to qualify for training opportunities.	• Post Secondary Education & Training should ensure everyone in a community should be eligible for training programs not just social assistance recipients. • Post Secondary Education and Training should work in a partnership basis with communities to determine eligibility and placement of students.
5. Provincial Training Allowance is inadequate.	• Post Secondary Education & Training should review the PTA allowance to determine its adequacy in northern Saskatchewan and to ensure that it is above SAP rates in order to provide an incentive to take training (i.e. Youth Futures Program).

XIV SASK. ECONOMIC AND CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Issues	Recommendations
1. The Third World level of unemployment in northern Saskatchewan means that there are few meaningful job opportunities. Consequently, both adults and especially youth have little hope. They are asking for opportunities, not handouts.	• The Department of Economic and Co-operative Development and Northern Affairs should support communities to establish Economic Development plans, Economic Development Committees and a local employment strategy.



- Job opportunities for northerners providing human service sector roles at the community level needs to be pursued. Social Service dollars should be used to cost share with other partners to provide new job opportunities.
- The Department of Social Services should work with other departments to create an education and training and employment strategy to complement the Welfare Redesign.
- Economic Development & Northern Affairs and SERM should work together to require that forestry companies and others hire locally. This should be enforced as well.
- A strong regional economic development strategy that includes an assessment of all resources is needed.
- Economic & Co-operative Development should encourage value added approaches. such as fish and game farms. wild rice processing. etc. Loans. grants. tax incentives and equity financing must be made available with flexible terms.
- Economic & Co-operative Development must place emphasis upon creating job opportunities for youth.
- A northern Corrections facility will provide northern jobs.
- Economic & Co-operative Development should provide technical and financial resources to establish locally-controlled community economic development organizations and projects which create employment and are sustainable. This could include core funding for Community Development Corporations as has been done in Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert (i.e. Neighbourhood Development Organization Program).

Issues	Recommendations
1. Current housing policies do not meet northern needs. The following specific problems exist: a) there is a severe housing shortage; b) the 25% percentage rule discourages people from seeking employment; c) the Remote Housing Program does not assist low income families; d) Single people have no access to housing.	• Municipal Affairs must increase funding for current housing initiatives • Municipal Affairs should adopt policies to encourage local hire and local purchasing in order to maximize local employment. • Policy change is required so that, instead of the 25% rule, there would be a flat rate for housing rentals. • Municipal Affairs should work with Social Services to develop community-based housing programs where community members build, manage and own their own homes on a partnership basis between the communities and government, similar to the Neighbourhood Home Ownership Program which currently exists in Saskatoon, Regina, and Prince Albert. • Municipal Affairs should take the initiative to review power consumption and costs.
2. Many communities have inadequate resources to maintain and expand infrastructure and administrative services to meet current demands.	• Municipal Affairs should take the initiative to ensure that communities have adequate financial resources to maintain and expand infrastructure and administrative services. More specifically some communities require the following: ◦ water and filtration systems; ◦ water and sewer systems; ◦ clean-up or demolition of contaminated houses in the community. • Municipal Affairs should make appropriate training available for the operation of water and sewer services.
3. There is a desperate need for more recreational activities and recreation workers to involve youth in constructive activities.	• Municipal Affairs should provide resources to ensure that there are recreational facilities, workers and programs in each community depending on population size.

4. There are a number of community planning issues: • community land base and taxation; • curfew by-laws are needed; • non-smoking by-laws are needed; • questions of expansion and future growth must be resolved; • the future of some communities is in question (i.e. Uranium City).	• Municipal Affairs should negotiate with northern municipalities with a view to providing municipalities more control over regional taxation, planning and development issues. • Municipal Affairs should review per capita allotments to municipalities and increase them based on current population.
5. The mentally and physically challenged require appropriate housing in their communities	• The Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing is requested to review the housing needs of physically and mentally challenged northerners with a view to providing appropriate housing at the community level.

XVI DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Issues	Recommendations
1. Policing was a big concern in a majority of the communities. Response times were very poor and people did not feel police were listening to their concerns. The following statement summarizes this feeling: "If a white business person called them, they'd be there in no time at all".	• The Department of Justice should support the establishment of community police boards. • New RCMP recruits must be culturally sensitized before being placed in the North. • Police services need to be more available with officers stationed in more communities (i.e. Jans Bay, Cole Bay and Canoe Lake). • Court services should be more visible in the smaller communities.
2. There is a need for northern communities to work in a partnership basis with the federal and provincial governments and the RCMP to determine the policing needs of the communities, including alternative community based Justice initiatives.	• Cross cultural sensitivity training for all RCMP and Justice personnel. • Establish a senior level aboriginal liaison position that is stationed in the North. • Support and extend existing Justice projects (i.e. La Loche CDC) to other communities. • Adequate financial resources to municipalities to hire more RCMP officers. • More adequate services from Legal Aid and/or use Legal Aid dollars for private lawyers.

- Department of Justice should assist northern communities to access dollars from the National Crime Prevention Strategy for a "Northern Crime Prevention Strategy".
- The Department of Justice should establish a community based justice strategy which will include restorative justice strategies, mediation, sentencing circles, community policing, etc.
- The Department of Justice should establish a northern corrections strategy which could include remote programs on the land where young offenders and others will practise traditional life styles, as an alternative to incarceration.

XVII SASKATCHEWAN ENVIRONMENT & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Issues	Recommendations
1. Communities need more control over their traditional land base.	• Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management should review land use policies to encourage traditional land uses.
2. In some communities contaminated and abandoned buildings need to be demolished.	• SERM, the Department of Social Services and other affected government departments should work together to provide short term employment to SAP recipients to demolish abandoned and contaminated buildings.
3. Broken beer bottles are a hazard on northern streets.	• SERM and the Liquor and the Gaming Commission should encourage products be sold in cans rather than in the bottles.

Issues	Recommendations
1. The necessity of travelling long distances for certain medical assistance creates hardship for northern people and particularly for those receiving small pensions.	• Travel for medical purposes should be subsidized. • Suitable medical transportation should be available whether by vehicle or by plane.
2. Return travel costs of emergency travel are currently the responsibility of the individual.	• Return travel costs of emergency medical travel should be covered by the health system. • Wherever possible local taxi service should be used for minor medical transportation.
3. There is a need for home care and emergency care for northern Elders.	• Home care and emergency services for Elders should be established where required.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION (1999-2000):

1. A formal agreement between New North and Department of Social Services (DSS) should be implemented through the immediate preparation and signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU will be an agreement to work together to find solutions to the issues identified in this report. The MOU will also emphasize the importance of northerners having significant input and involvement in the delivery of social services in their communities.

2. DSS should provide financial resources to New North to employ Community Development Co-ordinators to work with communities to priorize social development issues, identify solutions and to initiate community based healing processes. (See "Healing from the Inside Out" proposal submitted to DSS in September 1998).

3. A protocol should be developed for the hiring of northern social workers to deliver Social Service programs.

4. Social workers should spend more time in the communities on a regular basis.

5. When it is not possible to hire locally, DSS must ensure that the attitudes and behaviour of all workers are respectful and compassionate at all times.

6. DSS should review standards with regard to the number of cases carried by each worker and provide appropriate support to social workers to ensure that their mental and emotional well being is maintained. This process will help to ensure that clients needs are met.

7. Cross-cultural sensitivity workshops should be held for all employees.

8. Communities should be served from only one administrative centre. Services provided to communities should be reviewed to ensure that they are being provided from the most appropriate location.

9. DSS should conduct workshops at the community level to explain the programs and services that are available and to create more community awareness.

10. DSS policies and programs must take into consideration the goals and aspirations of the community as well. DSS must broaden the mandate of social workers to include the health and safety of the family and community, including a community healing approach.

11. Provincial governments, agencies and northern communities should take the initiative to work together to establish community based interagency structures and community resource teams to provide counselling and support programs. These community resource teams could be made up of both agency staff and knowledgeable community members.

12. DSS should review and change provincial programs (i.e. medical travel, etc.) to ensure equity with reserves.

13. DSS should investigate the possibility of non-reserve communities participating in joint federal/provincial programs that are available on reserves (i.e. ICFS agencies and joint welfare delivery systems).

14. DSS should initiate discussions with northern communities on the distinctions between discipline and abuse. Northern residents must have the opportunity to participate in the development of discipline guidelines and procedures for their community.

15. Communities must have greater opportunity for input, involvement in decision making, and responsibility for policies, regulations and delivery of programs. DSS must set up community based mechanisms such as Family Review Panels to allow communities to have a say in the standards that are applied and to provide policy direction for dealing with families in that specific community. Community based Welfare Committees or Panels should also be established.

16. DSS should work with northern communities to develop protocols with respect to the apprehension placement and return of children.

17. DSS should review foster care and community homes' policies and guidelines because many northern homes do not qualify. Northern models of foster care must be developed and DSS policies and standards adjusted to bring them in line with the northern situation. DSS should immediately establish a campaign to recruit aboriginal foster homes.

18. DSS must begin to work on a genuine partnership basis with northern communities in the delivery of programs. The option of community control and community delivery of certain programs should be examined with a view to these programs being delivered through community based organizations.

19. DSS should make available appropriate resources so that communities can conduct community awareness workshops (i.e. family violence, alcohol and drug abuse, teen pregnancy, etc.)

20. Since it is desirable that children be kept in their own communities and with their own families if at all possible, DSS is requested to immediately take steps to develop foster, community and therapeutic homes at the community level as required.

21. DSS should as a matter of policy provides resources for in home support services for families who require such services, as a means of preventing apprehensions.

22. Policy changes should be made by DSS to ensure that the foster allowance goes with the child so that kin will receive the foster allowance which will assist them to raise the child (i.e. grandparents raising grandchildren). This will recognize the extended family as the most appropriate setting for fostering.

23. DSS should ensure that all aboriginal children are placed in linguistically and culturally appropriate settings and those foster parents should have appropriate cultural training.

24. DSS should review the current mandate of DSS workers to ensure that their job role includes counselling and the promotion of family and community healing.

25. DSS should establish a standard for foster homes, which is similar to that of northern families so that when a child returns home, expectations have not been set up which cannot be maintained.

26. DSS should review how it currently works with other government departments to ensure that resources are available system wide to provide the following services:
    - Locally-based recreation facilities, workers, programs and counselling services;
    - More training and employment opportunities;
    - Community justice initiatives including a review of the young offenders act;
    - Northern, culturally appropriate youth healing lodges.

27. DSS and Northern Health Boards should work together to develop a campaign to discourage teen pregnancy. In the event of pregnancy, DSS and northern communities should work together to develop prenatal and post-natal and nutrition programs to ensure the well being of mothers and children.

28. DSS should take the initiative to establish a food subsidy to equalize food costs between northern and southern communities. (i.e. the cost of liquor).

29. DSS should review the Social Assistance Program SAP allowance for single parents to ensure that it is adequate in view of the higher northern cost of living.

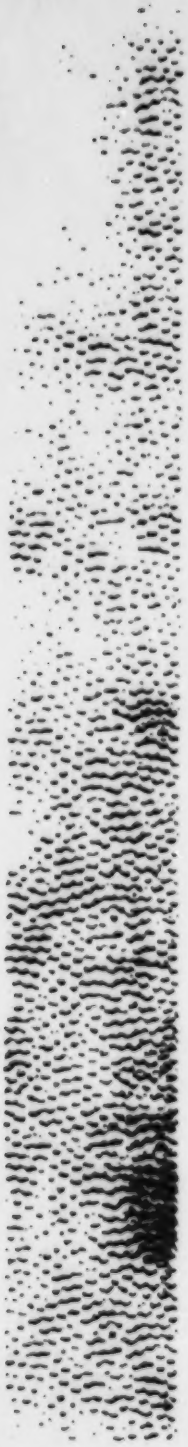
30. DSS work with northern health boards to ensure coverage for medical travel costs for persons who have had to travel out of their community for medical reasons. DSS should revise and change meal allowances to the same level as foster rates.

31. DSS and other government departments should review income support levels for the disabled and elderly to assess adequacy in relation to higher northern cost of living.

32. DSS must ensure that welfare policies encourage training and employment. To this end DSS policies must be drastically changed to encourage self-reliant behaviour where northern people are encouraged to make part of their living off the land with SAP used as a supplement. DSS policies should also encourage people to do work which will benefit the whole community and especially elders and single parents. (i.e. fishing, wood gathering).

33. DSS should review SAP regulations in co-operation with communities with regards to what is income. (i.e. money won from bingo, income tax refunds, lotteries, trapping etc).

34. DSS should make the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement available to single persons to provide incentives to seek full or part-time employment.



35. DSS should provide resources for the following:
    - Programs for both victims and abusers;
    - Prevention and awareness programs which promote family values to emphasize the importance of involvement with one's children;
    - Culturally appropriate parenting programs, which include budgeting and home making skills.

35. DSS should review the rates for persons with disabilities to reflect northern cost of living factors and special needs such as care and travel for specialized services available only at nearby communities.

36. DSS should take the initiative to request the Government of Saskatchewan to develop protocol agreements with the federal government, as well as with First Nations, Metis and Municipal organizations with respect to joint delivery of social programs in situations where current jurisdictional barriers block inter-community co-operation and sharing of services. Negotiations on such protocols must being immediately.

37. DSS should take the initiative to work with other government departments to ensure that there is relative equality between the federal and provincial rates for such things as social assistance, child welfare services and medical travel.

37. DSS should initiate discussions with Municipal Affairs with respect to the necessity to develop community based housing programs where community members build, manage and own their own homes on a partnership basis between the communities and government, similar to the Neighbourhood Home Ownership Program which currently exists in Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert.

39. DSS should work with other government departments to create an education, training and employment strategy, which complements the Welfare Redesign.

40. DSS should work with Economic and Co-operative Development to utilize SAP dollars to create employment in the human and public service sector in northern communities.

41. DSS is requested to ensure that other government departments are made aware of the recommendations in this report, which pertain to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED OVER A LONGER TERM (2000-2004):

1. Northern communities want local delivery of programs and services. Department of Social Services (DSS) is requested to provide community based workers in all communities. In smaller communities workers may be employed part time or may be shared between government departments.

2. In smaller communities where there is no social worker, DSS is requested to hire local people to provide a communication link and access to basic services.
3. Department of Social Services social workers should speak the language of the community.

4. DSS is requested to provide resources to support healing and wellness through the establishment a northern healing lodge, which incorporates a holistic model of healing.

5. DSS should establish a northern assessment and stabilization service with programming based on northern needs and aspirations.

6. DSS should provide resources to communities to establish Community Based Organizations to provide themselves with necessary services (i.e. child specialist, etc.).

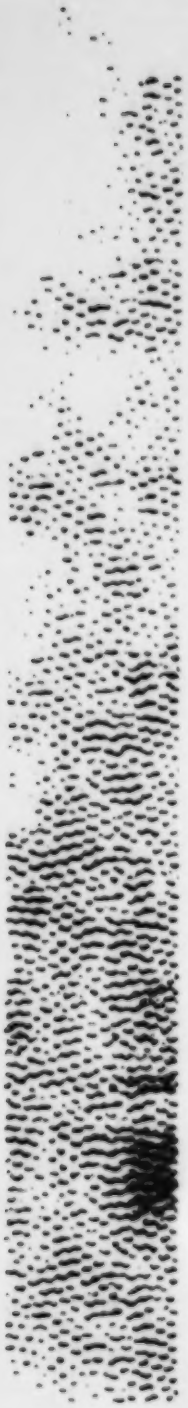
7. DSS should provide the necessary resources to northern communities to establish nutrition; infant care and day care programs.

8. DSS should provide resources to northern communities to establish northern safe homes and shelters.

9. DSS should work with other departments to ensure that Elder care facilities and programs are established in northern communities.

10. DSS should work with Northern Health boards and the federal government to ensure that Elders have access to adequate medical coverage and Elders have some means to supplement the old age pension.

11. DSS in conjunction with the Department of Health and the Northern Health Boards are requested to review Community Living services available to northerners who are mentally and physically challenged and develop programs to meet these needs.



VI. Conclusion

Throughout our community visits, there was a common theme in the concerns. No matter if the community was a progressive community, the concerns were similar right across the north, there is a shortage of opportunities in the way of jobs, education and other means of getting ahead. Due to the lack of these opportunities, alcohol and drug abuse run rampant. Family violence is on the increase and more people are resorting to this as a way of escape.

Northerners want to begin the healing process now, they can't wait any longer. It's just too hard to go on with life in this state. With a proper healing strategy in place, the north can grow to become prosperous and people will be able to provide for their families in a setting conducive to their needs and aspirations.

We propose that northerners begin the journey of healing by identifying what they believe their needs are by establishing a "Community Development Strategy" with northern-based workers. The slow movement towards revitalization can proceed. At the invitation of the community, New North community development workers will go into the community to assess their needs and to develop goals for putting together their own community development plan.

Once the plan has been put in place, the work will begin. In maintaining close contact with the community, the community worker will continue to dialogue on community redevelopment. After the work has begun, different initiatives will kick in. For example, there could be community workshops to deal with family violence or community gatherings to deal with specific issues. This all rests with the goals of the community in question. There are community development processes in place in other parts of Canada: these models can be explored and utilized in Northern Saskatchewan too.

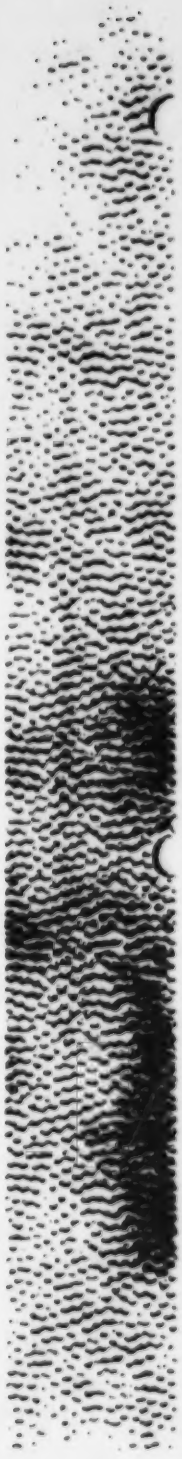
In the current day and age, there is no reason why any people should go through the problems northerners are going through. For example, there is an extreme housing shortage in the north. Too many people and too few houses. This further compounds the social state of the north. Crowded housing creates conflict in the average home. Young mothers having babies and overcrowding the home creates friction even in the closest of homes. The north has an abundance of natural resources to be able to have northern people build their own homes. This has to be encouraged more than it is now. A northern housing strategy has to be developed to meet what the actual needs and aspirations of the northern population. Through a proper housing strategy with enough government money, the north can have an ability to provide housing for their people. Banks and other lending agencies have to be encouraged to invest in the north. This way, more secure housing markets can be established.

Government policy in the housing area will have to change to reflect the average northern resident; everyone should have an equal opportunity to live in his or her own homes. In the rental area, government policy has to change to reflect the high cost of living in the north. The 25% rental amount is just too much for the average wage earner to provide lodging for their family. Some people would much rather go back on welfare than work. The current practice is typical right across the north. The government provides houses and social assistance to many people yet in owning the power and telephone corporations, they take their money back right away. Give and take, that's what many people across the north encounter on a daily basis.

Job creation is very important in the north. In the next twenty years, close to 12,000 jobs will need to be created in the north. These would have to be meaningful jobs with adequate pay and benefits. The Northern Dialogue Steering Committee process will begin that work soon. Better utilization of government money through decentralizing programs such as health, welfare, housing and other northern programs will provide an opportunity to create some jobs and provide northern based solutions to their plans and aspirations. If anything is going to be done for northern Saskatchewan, a comprehensive and detailed strategy is needed. This should include all affected people, First Nations, Metis, non-native and other aboriginal peoples. A political accord of some sort should be negotiated and finalized in the near future. (Appendix section contains details on Northern Dialogue Steering Committee process). Job creation will involve lots of money. In the case of northern Saskatchewan, approximately 1 billion dollars will likely be needed to develop the opportunities needed to create the necessary jobs. Looking at value added processes would help alleviate some of that. Industry has to be encouraged to keep the raw product here for final processing of it. Right now, too much leaves the north and with that goes the jobs associated with finishing the product. This should be done, regardless of the cost factor. If you look at the future of initiatives such as this, it is obvious that the cost of maintaining the current status quo will cost more and the people will be no further ahead.

New North wants to be able to give the northern Saskatchewan residents an opportunity their grandparents used to enjoy, an ability to sustain themselves in the best way they see fit, on their own. As one elder from Pinehouse pointed out to us during our visit there, running our own programs for our people is a goal but we have to be careful;

> *"Yes we want our own control, but we have to be careful in how we handle it, the government will watch over us extra carefully...waiting for our first mistake and then take it back from us. We have to show ourselves that we have to be responsible enough to handle our affairs."*
>
> *-Elder, Pinehouse Lake, Nov. 1998.*



Appendix "A"

Community Profiles

VII. Appendix A - Community Profiles

List of Communities Profiles with code.

1. Air Ronge ..... A
2. Beauval ..... Bea
3. Black Point ..... BL
4. Buffalo Narrows ..... B
5. Cole Bay C
6. Creighton ..... Cr
7. Cumberland House ..... Cu
8. Denare Beach ..... D
9. Descharme Lake ..... De
10. Dore Lake ..... Do
11. Green Lake ..... G
12. Ile a la Crosse I
13. Jans Bay ..... J
14. La Loche ..... La
15. La Ronge L
16. Patuanak ..... P
17. Pelican Narrows ..... Pe
18. Pinehouse Lake ..... Pi
19. Sandy Bay ..... Sa
20. Sled Lake ..... SL
21. St. Georges Hill/Michel Village ..... St
22. Stanley Mission ..... S
23. Stoney Rapids ..... Sto
24. Timber Bay ..... T
25. Turnor Lake ..... Tu
26. Uranium City ..... U
27. Weyakwin ..... W

Community visits June 23rd. 1998 and October 1st, 1998.

Population mostly made up of mixed Cree/Metis Non Native and other ethnic groups. Strong tax based community, many job opportunities and limited government services.

Air Ronge is mostly a service-based community next to La Ronge.

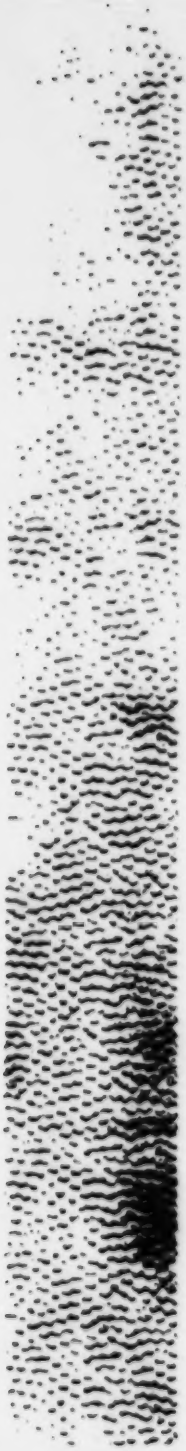
A part of the population is transient, most of the people moving in out of the community come from the Lac Ronge Indian Band which has 2500 band members living in and around the community.

There is a big concern in the area of negative youth activity with youth crime and vandalism on the increase. any problems are usually felt in the neighboring communities. There is a big concern over the young offenders and methods utilized for incarceration.

In the area of housing, there is an increasing market with more and more houses being built in the community, people who work should find their own homes for rent and leave the rest of the houses for people in dire need.

Issues of concern:

- Drug and alcohol abuse very rampant in and around the community, too many people drink or do drugs.
- High drop out rate in schools creates lows levels of education and less opportunities for people to advance themselves with better jobs etc.
- Youth crime and crime in general is a big concern in the community. Proper policing with adequate officers to do the job is a big concern in the community as well.
- In the area of gambling, Video Lottery Terminals (VLTs) are now a big concern in the community of La Ronge and surrounding area. Are people using all their money to try and win some. are their kids going hungry because of this? These are major concerns of this region.
- Teenage parents do not have skills to be parents. There seems to be social fabric deterioration in the north. No values or moral standards anymore.
- Lack of local programs in Air Ronge. too much in La Ronge. Need facilities such as homes. shelters etc.



Social Programs:

Air Ronge lacks a lot of services in this area. it's delivered through the regional offices in La Ronge. There is a general feeling like other communities. that, social services is not doing enough in the way of service delivery and so on.

- Childcare and child protection, right now, there are no services in Air Ronge and nowhere for people to turn to. if they need help. There is a need to explore and review existing policies in this area. to explore areas of assuming program dollars to start community based programs.
- Youth Services are inadequate in Air Ronge. There is a need to look at alternative methods of justice, i.e. restorative justice, mediation and other ways of diverting people away from the system.
- Parents need to take responsibility over their own kids, parents need to be parents. need to be full participants in community development.
- Resources-Foster homes, therapeutic homes. Right now, Air Ronge lacks in this service area. there is a feeling that there is too much duplication of services in this area. People do want foster homes, so training is needed for perspective foster parents. Besides that. the need to formally organize a foster parents association would likely proceed once organization begins.
- Income Support. reform very much needed in the program. Young people can be counseled to get on with life. Discourage young people from having babies and to be more responsible in this area. Have more life skills classes etc. Community needs to take control over programs such as these. Now is the time to disable the enabling system that is crippling a lot of our northern people, teach them independence not dependency.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

Like any northern community, Air Ronge has it's growing pains. It too would like to have all the services provided to any southern community its size.

- Overcome the jurisdictional barriers between the town and outlying communities in the area of service delivery, policing, social services and other government programs.
- Establish working relationships for above.
- Have government relocate some programs for delivery to Air Ronge.

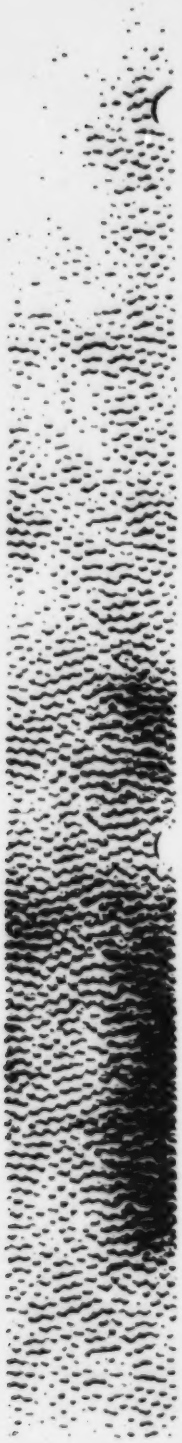
Future goals and aspirations;

Air Ronge has aspirations of becoming a bigger service centre and they would like to see the government share its jobs to the outlying communities such as Air Ronge.

- District is growing; current problems have to be addressed now.
- Explore community based justice initiatives. can Air Ronge look at sentencing circles and decide whether it's viable or not?
- Funding shortfalls. allocate more for that.

- Establish family parenting programs.
- Establish Youth Detention care facility in the community.

Air Ronge is on the move. There are now many businesses in the community, the village is growing and with that growth comes it's teething pains. The current council is working diligently to overcome those obstacles as they arise. They want to continue on with the current relationship between themselves, the Lac La Ronge Indian Band and the town of La Ronge to make it a better place to live.



2 Beauval-Population 1200

Community visits July 9. 1998 October 14. 1998

Beauval is made up of mostly Cree, Metis with some First Nations People. It can be a fair assumption when one says, Beauval has mobilized itself towards wellness. Beauval is no different from other northern communities. They too have high unemployment and from this grows all the social problems. Beauval is recognizing the need for healing/wellness and have tapped into skilled individuals to begin the process.

They have businesses in the community that provides services and employs local people. Other areas of interest could involve a tourism strategy, there is potential to expand on that market.

Issues of concern:

Alcohol and drug abuse was a major concern for the community members. They also identified youth crime, teen pregnancy and housing to be major items of concern to them:

- The need for more healing is a must, if the community is going to guide the youth into the future.
- Housing issues have to be addressed immediately, the cost of current rent is too high if you are working. There is a need to put a ceiling on that for all communities.
- The need for more prevention/awareness programs for the community.
- The need to hire a community based youth worker or other programs that the community can administer.

Social Programs:

- Family services program is delivered out of the Buffalo Narrows office, individuals come into the community on a weekly basis.
- There is a feeling that the program is inadequate because of the lack of information and what the mandate of the program is.
- Would like to have more education on problem solving and parenting skills programs for youth parents.
- Healing conferences in the community is a must, more must be held for everyone.
- In the child care sector, a protocol agreement should be put in place for apprehension and placement of children.
- For youth services programs, a community-based worker is needed in Beauval or has the current worker more visible and establishes programs through their office.
- The need for a youth treatment center in northern Saskatchewan.

- In the Foster and Community homes area, the community would like to see a model set up for northern communities.
- Income Security is delivered through the Buffalo Narrows office once a week and generally the current system is acceptable.

"Welfare is good for people, when they really need it."

-Beauval, Oct 1998.

- The community had considered forming a welfare board to work with the social worker, but that has not been followed through with yet. The committee would be able to sit and deal with recipients on complaints if any arose.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- There is feeling that the current systematic barriers of the government are getting in the way of the community's development.
- There is also a need to form community justice committees to deal with sentencing circles and other restorative justice programs.
- The need to establish more training opportunities with employment security upon completion.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Better economic opportunities in the forestry, fishing and resource extraction based sectors.
- The need to establish community based healing holistic initiatives.
- The need to train local people to deliver some of the essential government services.
- The need to be involved in some of the policy-making decisions for example the 18-year-old policy for assistance.
- The need to look at the whole educational systems. How can we bridge from high school to post secondary?

"We have some people here in Beauval who've gone to University and took out student loans to do so. In the end, we're finding some these people declaring bankruptcy because they can't pay back the loan. Something has to be done about that, we need post -secondary education, if it means people can't work after that, what's the use?"

-Beauval, Oct 1998.

Beauval is a progressive community and with direction and guidance will start the community into the healing journey.

The community still has small town values intact. They only need to promote the goodness of it.

3 Black Point-Population 80

Community visit October 27, 1998.

Black Point is south of the community of La Loche. It's a Dene/Metis community with most of the people coming from the surrounding area. After living in town for a few years, these people moved back onto the land to provide for their families.

Trapping and fishing do not provide enough financial resources for the people who live there now, so they rely almost totally on the government for help. Resource extraction in the forestry sector is close to them but they sit on the outside hoping for a piece of the action.

"Its still our land and resources, where did we lose control? Industry has to begin to uphold their responsibility and provide jobs to us...I believe that welfare is the root of all evil."

Issues of Concern:

- Alcohol and drug abuse and family violence and family breakdown are major concerns in Black Point.
- Water and sewer along with adequate housing needed for growing community.
- Most people live on welfare; it's hard for them to get good paying jobs.
- Inadequate community operating budget and there is a general sense that smaller communities are overlooked.
- Nobody owns their homes, some people are being evicted on their own lands.
- 95% of the people are unemployed and lack adequate education to get any good jobs.
- People are going hungry in their homeland that has to stop.

Social programs:

- Services are provided out of the La Loche office and most services are provided through that office.
- New Careers programs and others are also delivered through there, the people would like to see more control over these programs by community leaders.

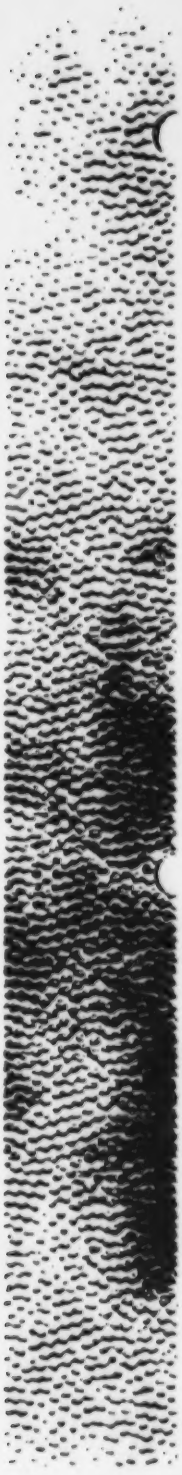
Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Get people to overcome the welfare trap and to become independent again.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Develop healthy community with good economic development model.
- Need affordable housing, people want to own their homes.
- More jobs and better opportunities in the resource sector.
- Child family services do not recognize extended families.
- Better elder care programs, sometimes they're not getting by on what they get from elder pension plans.
- Have leaders get in touch with the local people, we don't want any more meetings in fancy hotels down south, use the money where people really need it.
- To become self-determining, the community would like to see more control over their lands and resources.

Generally, the comments were all directed at moving ahead and not staying stuck in the welfare system. Black Point people can only look ahead to a brighter future where they can provide for their families and live in their own homes. They just want the opportunity to be able to do that.



4 Buffalo Narrows-Population 1250

Community visits July 6 and November 3, 1998.

Buffalo Narrows is a community nestled between several large bodies of water. The population is made up of Cree Metis, Dene and other ethnic groups.

Buffalo Narrows like all the other northern communities was affected by the introduction of social programs too. Today, we have a community that is almost 80% unemployed. Some forty years ago, the land sustained the people who live in the region. There was a sense of harmony among all land users and the concept of family and sharing was very much alive. Buffalo Narrows still has some of those prominent individuals who resort to some of the traditional lifestyles when policies and regulations allow them.

The community has taken advantage of the forest and resource based industries. There are a number of sawmills and logging truck owners. This creates some employment. Some outfitters hold bear hunting licenses for taking tourists out on the land. Wild rice creates other opportunities. Although these may seem viable operations, they are, but that does not fully meet the needs the needs of the total population, as these ventures occupy only so many people.

Buffalo Narrows has other businesses in the community, which meet the needs of the surrounding communities.

Issues of concern:

When it comes to social concerns, Buffalo Narrows is no different than the rest of the north. They struggle with alcohol, drugs, youth crime and family dysfunction.

- Due to inactivity and boredom, many young people are resorting to negative behaviors, such as vandalism, drugs and alcohol abuse.
- They are seeing their teens having babies, when they are not fully healthy in the area or age of physical, spiritual, emotionally or mentally able to provide for themselves and the child. There is no doubt there will be strains on all service providers.
- Social housing is again a contentious issue for most residents who occupy a housing unit. The 25% of gross income do not sit well with all people. The policy has to change to reflect the community or implement a flat rate throughout the north, where everybody pays the same regardless of income amount. Remote housing is an excellent program but again there is a fault. We are not targeting the poor people who neither have the credit rating or down payment.

- Training opportunities are not being utilized to the fullest. The community is the biggest stakeholder and they need to be key people when determining courses and programs as it relates to their community.
- The way current programs are being delivered namely (New Careers) is causing concerns for all communities. Buffalo Narrows would like to see the program transferred to the communities. They can better plan for their communities, as they know their people and what projects can work.

Social programs:

The delivery of services are from the Buffalo Narrows office and include the following communities of Beauval, Patuanak, Ile a Crosse, St. Georges Hill, Michel Village and Turnor Lake. They have two family service workers to work with these communities. The mandate is the health and safety of the child. They do not provide ongoing counseling, this is usually referred to mental health.

- We have heard that the mandate needs to change, especially for the north where they lack resources.
- One youth services worker for seven communities is not going to accomplish anything. There is a need to have community-based people who know and understand our youth. The community-based worker can have planned evening activities, as this is when youth need to be diverted from their negative activities.
- Foster Community homes: Buffalo Narrows struggles with attracting individuals to become caregivers. We never heard what might be hindering this process.
- Income Security, again, they service seven outlying communities and employ four and one half workers. Generally it was acceptable but did not really hear comments regarding the staff or the delivery of services.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- If the community struggles in the recruitment of caregivers, we may need to look at the current process. Are the current standards northern focused?
- The need to look at community based youth workers.
- Need to look at the mandate of family services as it currently stands, workers are limited when it comes to counseling their clients.
- The need to care for the elders of the community.

"The loss of our elders is destroying the community fabric, our elders are leaving, destroying forever the concept of family."

-Buffalo Narrows, July 6, 1998

- The need for more training opportunities with the community members themselves deciding on what is going to be economically feasible for them.

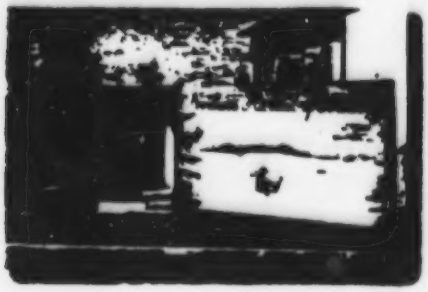
Future goals and aspirations:

- More input is needed from communities when policies are being drafted.
- Unity, harmony and peace are needed to live with one another.
- This last statement only confirms that healing needs to take place before we can achieve that goal.
- Need to look at the whole justice system, to make it more workable in the north. community based justice initiatives has to be explored to the fullest.
- Land base needs to be expanded.
- Limited in the utilization of the natural resources of the region.

The community of Buffalo Narrows is striving to become more progressive in the business development area. As we heard, economic and social development must go hand in hand. If the community is in the healing mode, then one needs to be mindful of this.

Community visit July 8th. 1998- October 15th. 1998.

Cole Bay is a community made up of mostly Cree/Metis and Bill C-31. The settlement portrays a serene and peaceful aura to outsiders looking in, once, exposed to the harsh realities of the community, you realize that Cole Bay is no different from other northern communities.



The old way of life is a common theme to all people in the north. The clash of the two economic systems occurred when change happens, usually it's been for the worst. In the old system, the land provided for all people. The fur trade/industrial economic system was a foreign system to northerners. Our forefathers lived in harmony with nature and all shared and cared for one another. The introduction of social programs seen as more from an independent to dependent state.

Cole Bay wants to begin working towards self-determining their future, community leaders want more say and involvement in programs such as social services. The community has a vibrant non-aboriginal business of which they say has seen favoritism when dealing with this business.

Issues of Concern:

Like all other communities, Cole Bay has an unemployment rate that is around 85-90%. There is a need for more economic and social opportunities to balance the old and existing system that's in place.

- Training opportunities with employment as the end result is needed for all communities.
- The community is prepared to start the healing journey but needs outside help.

Social programs:

- The community sees itself as somewhat stable in the area of child protection, therefore they feel that family service programs are adequate.
- Further to this, they want some involvement in the area of child apprehension though. Instead of the current process of outsiders running this, they want involvement in it.
- The community is having great success with their youth programs. They feel that youth services programs as going quite well for them.
- In the area of foster/community homes, the community is unsure of the resources available.
- Want to utilize the resources for their children first before others are considered.
- For the Income Security Programs, generally people feel that program meets the needs of the people there, but the worker is very insensitive to the clients and not doing enough case planning.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

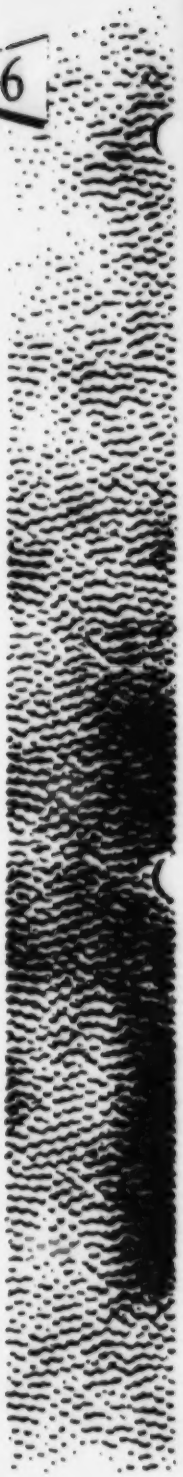
- A big concern for people in Cole Bay has to do with inter jurisdictional barriers and the conflict that usually results from it. government policy getting in the way of community progress.
- Detailed and comprehensive training and employment strategies are needed in order to ensure a deal of success of any opportunities created through this venture.

Future goals and aspirations:

- There is a community need to develop the short and long term goals of the community. Healing is going to be a major undertaking by the community members and they feel this is going to be the way to go.

Cole Bay like other northern communities is also struggling to achieve the wants and needs for the hamlet.

Creighton-Population 1600 with some people from the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation living in the community.



Community visits-July 15th and October 8th, 1998.

Creighton is on the Saskatchewan/Manitoba border, named after the Tom Creighton a famous geologist who founded and discovered the major ore deposits earlier this century. The community sits next door to Flin Flon, Manitoba, a small city of close to ten thousand people. It has been the hub of mining activity since then. With a stable tax base and jobs, the community has seen the boom and bust cycle of the mining industry since it's inception. The community is mostly made up miners and workers who come from all across Canada to mine the deposits of copper and zinc.

Issues of Concern:

Like the rest of the northern communities, Creighton faces similar social problems too, despite a higher than average employment rate. Youth crime, teen pregnancy and family violence are a big concern.

The community straddles the border, therefore it runs into inter-jurisdictional problems. Housing is also a concern.

- Youth crime is on the increase because a lot of them feel there is nothing else better for them to do.
- Gambling is a big problem in the community too.
- Education is not too much of a concern, there are enough adequate facilities in the region to meet the needs and requirements of the population.
- With an economic base solely reliant on mining, the community worries about the future of the industry in the region, what will happen once the mines are depleted? The towns' leaders are now raising these questions. They would like to see those more northern-based value-added processes are put in place.

The town's people rely on Saskatchewan Social Services for the delivery of programs to the people. In comparison, Flin Flon, Manitoba delivers its own programs to people and they find it degrading to their self-esteem. The first three months are through the city and then they move onto the provincial system.

- New Careers is available in the community and they generally agree that it is a good program.
- Saskatchewan Employment Supplement program is good too, can provide employers an opportunity to hire people and they can have their wages supplemented.
- People who want to upgrade themselves also have access to post secondary training allowances.
- Child protection and child care, generally these programs are working well and need more information to establish networking system.
- Resources, foster therapeutic, elder care and safe homes/shelters, most of these services are available through different service delivery agencies in Flin Flon. Some elders care in Creighton.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Need to establish more programs on Saskatchewan side such as service delivery programs etc.
- Continue working with surrounding communities for better economic development plan for region.

Future goals and aspirations:

- To establish non-smoking by law for youth under 18.
- Develop and implement curfew by law.
- Plan and organize more community based social functions.
- Re instill the community youth drop in centre at the Sportex.

The town of Creighton has many opportunities. The leaders are community minded and would much rather live there than move anywhere else. But they do worry about the future of the town. What will be left once the mines have finished their work? How many people can the region sustain in the way of jobs? Questions that will have to be answered some time in the near future. The community is also a part of many positive initiatives for positive, for example, the "Virtues 2000 Program" for young people. It teaches virtues and values to young people. This is something the rest of the north can use. See appendix for more information.

Cumberland House-Population 2000 with 1400 in community and 600 on the reserve

7

Community visits were held on July 16 and early October 1998.

Cumberland House is one of the oldest communities in Saskatchewan. Started by the Cree people many years ago. Cumberland House played a big role in the fur trade era.

Situated at the delta of the Saskatchewan River, the community has a rich history in all facets of local industry from being the first agricultural community to one looking at advancing into the next millennium as an independent one.

Cumberland House is growing very fast and with the increase in a higher than average youth population, the problems associated with them are great. During our visit, we had a chance to hear from the leaders and people about this concern. The community has faced a lot of vandalism and break ins. Because of that, they formed a concerned citizens group to deal with the concerns.

Issues of Concern:

Poverty and unemployment are areas of major concern close to 90% of the people do not work and dependence on social programs is very high. This inactivity has elevated the youth crime statistics. Other areas of concern include: teen pregnancy, low levels of education, gambling and other social concerns top the list. There are many concerns and the community now feels its ready to tackle these issues in a collective manner, working together to deal with them.

- The community wants to see development in other areas of community growth for example increased training opportunities to develop infrastructure and so on.
- Devise a community plan to take on more control of government programs, government policy gets in the way and the community wants to begin devising ways of controlling their own destiny.

"We want to attain autonomy and we know that could create problems for us. So each community needs to look at what they have before they can proceed. We want to government to provide equality to us in the way of program transfer, then we can plan our own lives."

-Cumberland House, October 1998.

Social programs:

There is a feeling that the current SAP rates are too low and do not adequately reflect the high cost of living in the north. The community has a high percentage of users and needs to have it's own worker in the community to work with clients instead of the current system of having a social worker coming in from Nipawin.

- Because there are few job opportunities in Cumberland, the community feel people go to school for nothing. They come home as graduates and have to leave again because of the lack of jobs there.
- Change government policy to reflect aspirations of the community.
- The New Careers program needs to be run by the community. There is a need to go where the jobs are and not to make this program run according to government rules. Through this process, if the right training programs were incorporated into the system. People could eventually get off welfare.
- Child protection and child care workers come out of Nipawin, that usually creates problems in situations of emergencies, its too far to travel and the community wants to deliver it's own program like the reserve's ICFS program.
- Foster homes are needed in Cumberland, proper community based training for new homes has to be developed so more homes can be available to foster children. There are no other homes to deal with therapeutic, safe homes and shelters. Elder care is delivered out of Nipawin.
- Mental health workers travel from Nipawin and they need to be more conducive to the communities needs. For example, we were told about a young man who was suicidal and when they phoned the mental health worker, the young man was told to wait until a worker could make it there the next day. He killed himself that night.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Healing of the community must begin and with that will come positive growth. Then they can deal with problems like youth crime and other social ills of the community.
- Develop a stronger relationship with the reserve community, they have programs that can be utilized by everyone.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Want to deliver own programs to own people through partnership arrangements.
- Develop community infrastructure to include program delivery and other forms of autonomy.
- Develop partnerships with government and band to deliver better services to all community members regardless of their status.
- Create better training opportunities and jobs for young people.
- Develop community justice initiative to include all facets of an ideal community justice system.

- Continue working with community support groups in the areas of day care, aboriginal head start program and the family crisis worker.

All in all Cumberland House is beginning to deal with the social problems of the community, during our last meeting a citizens action committee was formed to deal with the high youth crime. In a recent drug sting operation the RCMP were also able to charge some community members with trafficking in drugs shortly after that.

Whenever community functions are held, everyone takes part in it. They are very proud of the people from their community who've achieved prominent status abroad for example, Solomon Carriere a well known canoeist is a role model for young people. Keith Goulet, Member of the Legislative Assembly for the region, is also from Cumberland House.

Being the oldest community has its benefits as well, the area is rich in history and has a lot of potential to expand its tourist and agricultural capacity. Rich soil and land from deposited delta soil is ideal for growing anything.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Continue working with people to overcome problems as a community.
- Ensure that foster parents are in it to take care of children and not for the money.
- Devise community justice initiative.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Have own police officer in Denare Beach.
- Work with the Band to develop good community plan with the longer intentions of establishing a partnership protocol.
- Want to have court in community.
- Hire more local people who have social work degrees and can do the work for local people.

Denare Beach is a good community to live in and the retired people who live there now would much rather live there than any where else. The cost of living is affordable and people are happy with that. There are still obstacles that must be overcome and people are willing to look at options to that.

There is a sense of community for the people who live in Denare Beach. people take care of each and watch out for each other. They want to protect that and make sure that any new development includes everyone

8

Denare Beach-Population ""6 with close to 250 of the people from the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation.

Community visits July 15 and Oct 1998.

Denare Beach formally started as a small fishing community. Now it's a community for retired miners from the Flin Flon and Creighton area. It has a pretty stable tax base and adequate housing market for the people who live there. Social programs such as welfare and housing concerns are low in Denare Beach.

"We are concerned about the transients who come and go here. they are putting a strain on our social system. housing prices are depreciating because of the welfare families moving into the neighborhood. We need to put a good community development plan together to combat this."

-Denare Beach. July 1998.

Mining is big in the area. a new mine is being developed on the outskirts of the community and should bring a stable tax base with it for years to come.

Issues of Concern:

- Drug and alcohol abuse is a big concern for the residents.
- Bingo and VLTs in Flin Flon and Creighton a big concern as well.
- Youth Crime is also on the increase and family violence issues are prevalent in the aboriginal community.
- The band is trying to acquire land in the community; it's generally felt that this could create a jurisdictional barrier once that happens.
- Teen pregnancy is not high in Denare Beach. the youth population is low compared to other northern communities.
- Devise community plan to include curfew by-laws and so on.
- Mining has been a big contributing factor to the community, there is worry that this could change when the mines' ore reserves are depleted.

Social programs:

- Social assistance dependency is not too high in Denare Beach so many people do not use programs such as New Careers.
- Child care and child protection, there is a question as to whether children being brought into the community from elsewhere are properly being taken care of.
- Foster homes. therapeutic. elder care and safe homes/shelters are all available through delivery agencies in Flin Flon.

Community visits July and November 1998

A small resort community north of Sled Lake. Dore Lake is home to many retired farmers from the south that like the north and what it has to offer. It was a popular fishing area at one time. Forestry companies have extracted most of the best timber from the region and there are roads all over the place. Being mostly an elderly community, the concerns are much more different than the rest of the north. The people are less worried about employment and more about proper health care for the elderly.

Issues of Concern:

- Unemployment, youth crime, family violence and gambling are all low on the list of concerns.
- Housing rent is a big concern, especially the 25% rental amount.

Social programs:

- Social Services programs usage is limited in Dore Lake and those who do utilize service are helped through a worker from Green Lake and Meadow Lake.
- The Metis Local does provide some programs such as New Careers and addictions services.
- More information needed for SES program.
- PTA is not needed because of limited young population.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Elder care facilities are needed in the community, especially in the area of health care.
- Train individuals from the community to deliver various programs for elder care and safe homes as needed.
- Need to create job opportunities for youth that are leaving due to lack of opportunities.
- Need more job opportunities for people in the forest industry.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Organize more community functions for elders and community members.
- Develop home care and emergency care for elders.

Dore Lake is a small community that does not have many social concerns. It is just the right size for the people who live there and far enough from the hustle and bustle of the south. People are happy with what they have, they just need a few more things like health services, which is not readily available to them.

9 Descharme Lake-Population 30

Community visits October 26, 1998.

A small community north of La Loche where the dene/Metis people still live as they did many years ago. People are still reliant on the land for most of their livelihood. It provides for them and they enjoy the serenity of the northland.

Issues of Concern:

- The main issues from the community mostly deal with the remoteness of the community and the high cost of transporting goods into the community.
- The programs available to people are too far away and people need to have access to programs.

Social programs:

- SAP is available to most of the people who rely on it to supplement their income.
- Housing is available there for people who need it, but there is a need to have better septic systems in the community.
- Foster homes are available there but there is a need to provide counseling services for the youth that are in the community under the program.
- Get more information about programs available across the north.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Being a small community on the fringes of civilization, Descharme Lake only wants to have the same benefits as their southern counterparts.
- They would like to see more housing and adequate school opportunities for the young people in their community.

Descharme Lake is still far enough from too much southern influence and the values and traditions of the dene of the region are still strong. They want to preserve that and want to be assured that their way of life will continue into the next millennium unabated.

- There is mistrust with the workers who handle these cases and they are not visible enough in the community.
- Social Services is creating conflicting standards for children utilizing the group home by providing extravagant clothing for them.
- The community needs to establish their own guidelines for apprehension and placements
- Youth Services need to be more visible in the community.
- Foster and Community homes should be established for the right reasons and not as a money making venture.
- The community needs to identify their own homes and set and regulate how they should be run in coordination with government rules.
- Income Security, generally, the community supports the current system and how it works for the people
- If other communities were looking at policy changes, they would also like to have input into negotiations and consultations.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- There is need to increase the amount of government operating grants, with inadequate tax bases and lack of proper fiscal resources in order for the communities to better establish their own infrastructure.
- Current policies and regulations not meeting northern needs.
- The need for a Green Lake based family worker is needed, the individual can work closely in the healing process.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Better economic development opportunities in the forestry and resource based sectors.
- Positive building on family values which is prevalent in the community.
- Create more opportunities for the skilled people who are available to work in the community.
- Holistic healing approach must be taken, not a band aid approach, this can include programs for batterers and elder care facilities for people wanting to live closer to home.
- The need to hire qualified people to run the group home.
- The need for more prevention and awareness programs which should include communication.

Green Lake is on the verge of becoming more progressive in the business sector. Recently, the village signed intent to work with an American based forestry company to process value added timber at its sawmill. They want to be decision-makers in the future of their community.

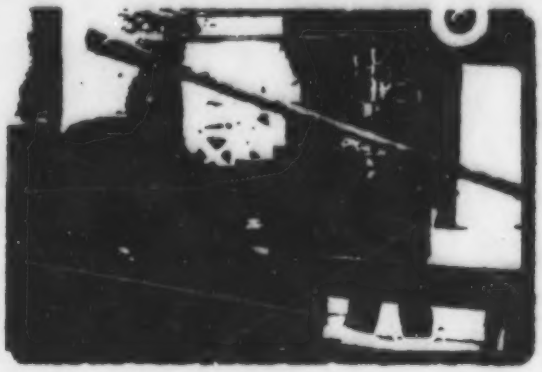
"We can help change, if we had the support...But nobody listens to us!"

-Green Lake, Nov. 10, 1998.

Community Visits-July and November 12th. 1998.

Mostly of Cree Metis descent. Green Lake is the center and heart of the of Northwest Saskatchewan.

In the past 40 years. the community has gone from being an independent to a dependent state. The introduction of welfare. social housing and other systematic barriers has had and is still having a profound effect on their everyday lives. The traditional lifestyles of their forefathers are only a memory for them. The efforts to practice this once sustaining livelihood of trapping and fishing are no longer viable.



The community owns the local sawmill. It provides employment for some people: however. the unemployment rate is still around 85%.

There are other small businesses that provide services to the community. Green Lake being a bordering community to a larger centre will always struggle to develop and support their own businesses. The competition and freedom to shop around will always be a factor when future development is considered.

Issues of Concern:

As a result of high unemployment. the social climate is having a compound effect on the people and community. Green Lake has reiterated what the rest of the north has been telling us all along. Alcohol. drug abuse and negative youth activity and family breakdown are some of the problems facing them. They have little or no essential services in their community to assist the people in need.

- The young people need to be given more responsibilities with planned activities. This will deter them from seeking the negative influences.
- The imposed 25% housing rent by the government for employed people are a big concern in Green Lake as well.
- Sub-standard housing and lack of housing are a common occurrence in northern communities. The northern leaders need to be involved in the planning and decision-making processes where it involves their communities.
- The community has access to social services from Meadow Lake. Income security personnel have regular visits, where as family service workers are around only when a crisis arises.
- The community wants to control the New Careers program.
- Social Programs starting with family services there is a general feeling that child protection cases are not being reported.
- The community does not want to see any more apprehended children leaving the village

We need to house our children in our own homes. We don't need to see any more of our children leave our town and be raised by other people."

-Ile a la Crosse. November 1998.

- The community would like to see some of the former foster children get help in the area of healing because of the abuse they experienced there.
- The community would like to be involved in their own assessment/stabilization process.
- Income security needs to be revamped as well; the community would like to have their own worker.
- There is a need to have more resources for the single mothers, for example, the need to increase allowances and to teach them parenting, budgeting and other skills needed to run a household.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- The jurisdictional barrier now experienced by the community in the area of service delivery must be overcome. Social services and other government programs are ones that can be run by the community.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Ile a la Crosse is a progressive community that wants to see change for the entire north.
- There is a feeling that everyone has to have the same opportunities such as people with disabilities who are able to work like anybody else can.
- The community needs to begin involving all service delivery agencies to come together and priories and work on common social economic issues.
- Elder care is needed in the community.
- There is a need to for more mental health and social workers in the community.
- Community based resource teams to work in the community and be a partner in the delivery of mental health services. The community has identified through its human resource base, people who can do that work.
- The community wants to have local people run their own social programs to their own people.

"We need to hire our own child specialist. We are seeing more and more behavioral problems with our children in the schools. We need to do something about that."

-Ile a la Crosse-November 1998.

- The rehabilitation centre is seeing more people who are coming forward with sexual and physical abuse complaints. are the people who are working with these clients are not getting the same pay or recognition as an outside specialist.
- If the community were to have their own social worker in the community. that individual would be able to work at the hospital and be accessible to deal with students in the school too

12 Ile a la Crosse-Population 1550

Community visits July 8, 1998 and November 5, 1998.

Ile a la Crosse is a rapid growing community with 70% of the population under 17 years of age.

The community has a history that goes back hundreds of years. People in the earlier years were independent. They lived in harmony with the land around them: it provided everything for them. The clash of this economic system with the European Industrial system was unconsciously paving the way for what was to transpire. The aboriginal peoples were going to be integrated into the main stream society. The loss of their land base and traditional lifestyles were replaced with social housing and schools, both boarding and residential and welfare. These various programs were good for people in need such as elders, single mothers dads and the disabled. In today's ideal world, dependence has replaced all other ideals.

Issues of Concern:

- Ile a la Crosse is faced with a 60% plus unemployment rate. In most cases, lack of activity and boredom will result in unhealthy choices/lifestyles. Like most communities, they too are faced with alcohol and drug abuse and all the other social ills that contribute to a dysfunctional state.
- Social programs, in the area of family services, its delivered out of Buffalo Narrows and people come twice a week to deliver it. This current system is not working to their advantage.
- The mandate needs to be able to provide counseling to their clients.
- They would like to hire their own child specialist and to base a local worker in the community.
- Further to this, any policies that are in place to direct any of these programs need to reflect the goals and aspirations of the local people.
- Protocols are needed to deal with apprehensions and placement of children.
- Youth Services needs a lot of attention especially with a high population of young people the community would prefer to have a local based individual to work in this field.
- Other social areas in the field of foster and community homes also needs a lot of work, there is a need to encourage people to become caregivers. The liabilities issue may be hindering this process. There is fear that if any thing goes wrong with the child that they would be held accountable for that.
- The community would like to see a change in standards and policies for community homes.

- The other idea that came out of the Ile a la Crosse meeting dealt with a northern based youth healing lodge.
- Community based justice initiatives need to be expanded on and strategies need to be developed for the communities.
- The community would like to see a follow up of the recommendations from this report followed up with. There was a feeling that this report would be shelved and nothing done with the results.
- Social and Economic development workers need to assist with community development programs. The community wants to see resurgence in this sector because they want to achieve independence through devolution of some government services.

Community visits August 12 1998 and October 15, 1998.

Jans Bay is a small community mostly Cree Metis people.

The community has identified a great resource base, if given the opportunities can turn the 95% unemployment to 100% employment. Here again, like most northern communities, Jans Bay struggles with the impact of social problems, which might be caused by inactivity, boredom, low self-esteem, and the feeling of not really having a purpose.

The community has a small business community. It is made up of 2 small stores that employs local people.

Issues of Concern:

- Social and economic opportunities need to start moving forward. Everyone has to do this together including the community and government.
- Good training opportunities are needed now, if the community is to ever attain a sense of independence.
- The community needs to identify individuals who can help in mobilizing the community.
- Social Workers need to come to Jans Bay on a regular basis. Workers need to have more understanding and show more compassion and respect.
- The existing mandate for the New Careers program has to change. Local governments want more say and control in the delivery of the program.

Social programs:

- For the Family Services sector, the community says the program has to be more visible in the community. It also needs more prevention and awareness programs, the community would like to have more involvement in the process too.
- Youth Services needs to be more involved with the community's youth, if they are going to be re-directed.
- Foster and Community homes are non existent in the community.
- Generally the community says that the Income Security program is acceptable but they also told us this:

"People have to learn to get by on what they get from social services, some of our people do resort to bootlegging and pushing drugs to feed and provide extras for their family."

-Jans Bay: October 1998.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- The whole area of inter-jurisdictional barriers (systematic barriers) including government policies and regulations often gets in the way of community progress.
- Whenever Northlands College comes around to reviewing course programs for the community, they want to be involved in that decision-making process.
- The need to mobilize the community. There are skilled people who can work in the community. The community human resource needs to be recognized and adequately compensated for the community development work that needs to take place immediately.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Better economic development opportunities in the forestry, fishing and other resource based sectors.
- Encourage social services to be more visible in the community.
- Establish better communications in the area of post secondary program delivery into the community.
- Establish a wholistic community based healing initiatives, which should include the four elements of balancing ones' life.

Jans Bay like all other northern communities are requesting that they be given the same opportunities to become a viable healthy producing community.

La Loche-Population 2500-3000 including reserve and surrounding area

14

Community visits August 11 1998 and October 26, 1998

One of the largest Dene Metis communities in northern Saskatchewan, La Loche is a social experiment gone awry. Almost every government program has been tried and millions have been spent on trying to make it a viable vibrant community. Up until the 1960's, the people were pretty well self-reliant. Trapping and fishing played a big role in the lives of the people. La Loche was a major stopover on the fur trade route over the last 250 years.

The community is growing fast, the schools contain over 1500 students and housing is overcrowded because of the young population and lack of adequate housing.

Each year, the government puts in millions of dollars in services to the community members. The police force is large for a community of that size and the liquor store provides a service that is not conducive to a healthy community.

> *"The liquor store makes a profit from us, it's always busy, why can't the government put that money into the Community Development Corporation? It's needed more here than in the government's pockets in Regina."*
>
> *-La Loche, October 1998.*

Even with all this negativity around them the people are very proud of who they are, the dene language is still spoken by a majority of young people and the community leaders are looking at more viable business opportunities for ensuring that more young people work in the future.

Issues of Concern:

- Drug and alcohol abuse including family violence, family breakdown and unemployment, which are about 95%, are major concerns in La Loche.
- Inadequate housing for a growing population is also high on the list of concerns.
- Gambling is big, bingo and other games of chance are played by a lot of people, and the town's VLTs were removed after the people complained about how much money it was taking out of the community.
- Community safety, police are not sensitive to the local culture.
- Teen pregnancy and youth crime top the list of concerns.
- Jurisdictional barriers are a concern too.

Social programs:

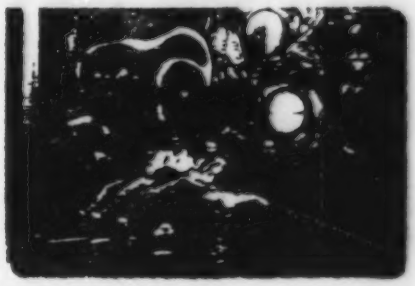
- The community is almost totally reliant on the social system for being there. Almost 95% of the population are reliant on the system to house and feed them.
- The community would like more control over the new careers program. they want to decide who should work and how many people should work. There is also concern over the employer contribution, most communities can't afford to employ people with the current budget they get from the government.
- More information is needed on other government programs such as child benefit and Saskatchewan Employment Supplement programs.
- There is a feeling that the post secondary training allowance program is adequate but more is needed in the community.
- Much is needed in developing a healthy model for the community development in the areas of foster homes, therapeutic homes, elder care facilities, safe/shelters homes and community living services for the mentally and physically challenged.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Provide adequate housing and space for families.
- Secure enough funding to adequately run the Community Development Corporation.
- Establish goals and aspirations for community development, which should include running own social programs, training, education and workshops for unhealthy individuals.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Devise community-healing model to include own therapists, establish good foster care facilities to keep kids in La Loche.
- Develop local infrastructure to deliver own programs. These include the CDC facility, Dene Kwan youth/teen parent program and proposed friendship centre.
- Better health care facility
- Establish better communication between current system in place now, which includes, policing and social services program delivery.
- Continue developing community justice initiatives with adequate resources and funding.
- Establish stronger ties with the reserve community in the service delivery sector.



La Loche people are community minded, the Community Development Corporation is trying to get on its feet and the town is busy working with different forestry companies to establish a saw mill for the forest fire burn areas this past summer.

All in all, it's a big task when you take into account how much the community has to grow in infrastructure development in the coming years. La Loche has many people who have succeeded in outside ventures such as teaching, policing and the medical training areas.

Community visits June 23rd. 1998 and October 2nd. 1998.

Mostly made up of non-native. Cree, Metis and other aboriginal people from across the north.

La Ronge is the formerly the headquarters for the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, DNS; it was home for many government people in the 1970's.

That has changed over the years, but it still provides a lot of government services through it's regional offices in La Ronge. It is the largest community in the north and has a relatively stable tax base with many of the homes in the community being owned by the people. The rental market is also relatively stable, but more is needed.

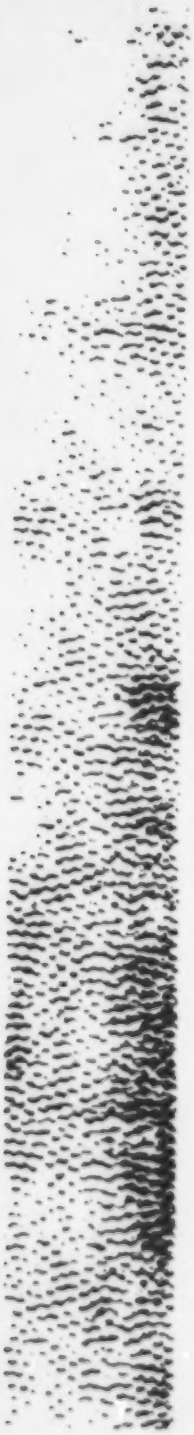
Although, La Ronge has a lot of jobs for people, there is still a big concern in the area of youth. Alcohol and drug abuse is high here too. Unemployment is a big concern for the many people who have limited educational skills. More and more there is a growing concern over gambling addiction in the community.

"There is fear that a lot of neglect is going on because of bingo and VLT's. Kids are going hungry here."

La Ronge does not lack in the area of service delivery; it has a lot but the community as a whole needs to begin looking at the proper ways of healing it's populous. There are variables that get in the way, distinct boundaries between the three communities often finds people lost in the cracks.

Issues of Concern:

- VLT's, bingo and other forms of gambling are destroying the social fabric of community.
- Extended bar hours into Sunday creating concern for local town council, want to see cans brought into the north rather than bottles, want to influence policy change in this area.
- Youth need more attention, better programs etc.
- Value of traditional lifestyle, welfare supplements that.
- Nutritional programs are needed to feed hungry children in the community.
- Wondering whether government will uphold it's end of the deal in this process of "consultation."
- Worried about the fact that people make more of a living off welfare than they do working, why is that?
- Lack of community control, need more at that level.



Social Programs:

La Ronge has many of the social programs identified in this process; we were able to determine whether or not people benefited from them during our review process. People do know about the programs, they just need more information about them.

- Child protection and childcare, there is concern that the system is not working as well as it should because of parents with inadequate skills and so forth. Need more foster homes, proper parenting programs etc.
- Want to bring community back together.
- Youth services, there are programs such as mediation including custody and alternative measures. We heard that jail is sometimes better than the home that these kids come from. Work placement systems don't always work because of lack of supervision.
- Need to set up own alternative measures systems and recommend policy changes to reflect that.
- Income support generally there was a feeling that people are encouraged not to work and definite changes need to be made to change that.
- People need opportunities not handouts.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Instead of talking about change, people must initiate it, for example policy change, this can't be acted upon if no one is willing to move on it.
- Retraining for upgrading individuals, encourage that if people want to change their lives.
- Establish community based healing initiatives through various mediation services and other methods of doing this. Police have too much work at times and the community has to be responsible for people who can be rehabilitated.
- Devise protocol arrangements between the provincial and federal government in the service delivery sectors.
- Not enough elder care facilities in the community, definite need to improve in that area. People need to be closer to home.

Future goals and aspirations:

More government assistance is needed in setting up relevant programs for people of the community.

- Encourage people to live on their own.
- Have grandparents live closer to family units for physically and mentally challenged individuals.
- Town itself does have capability to do all these things on their own without government intervention.
- Encourage government to withdraw VLTs from community, jurisdictional matters in this area will have to be thoroughly examined to ensure that these types of negative impacts don't happen again in the future.

- Bring all three communities together to deal with the issues of common concern towards healing.

In essence the town and members would like to see more done in the area of welfare reform and better programs to ensure that the enabling system can be disabled.

> *"We can't always live in the past and we must begin to live for the future beginning with today. all issues such as VLT's and gambling. Other concerns are alcohol and drug abuse and what to do with the youth. all rests in our hands...we can rebuild the north and encourage our people to live healthier lives."*
>
> *-La Ronge-June 23, 1998*

As La Ronge heads into the next century, they are planning for a much larger community than they have now. It's anticipated that the town and surrounding areas' population will be up to 10,000 within 10 years. The town council is planning for many changes to happen in their area and plans for future are already underway.

16

Patuanak-population under 100.

Community visits on July 9th and October 19th, 1998.

Situated on the headwaters of the mighty Churchill River. Patuanak is home to 100 people. situated next door to the English River First Nation, the community has seen a decrease in it's population with the advent of Bill C-31 over ten years ago.

The Dene of the region were once self reliant. the land provided for them in adequately. fish. meat. supplies to build things and so on. Almost everything they needed was there for them.

Slowly people began to move into the community and left their land behind. with that more and more people became dependent on the social assistance system and created the current situation.

Issues of Concern:

- Alcohol and drug abuses in relation to other matters surrounding them are prevalent in the community.
- Lack of opportunities with school and training creates a very unstable workforce. jobless rate is around 75%. There are few jobs after people have been trained. Would like to see that more meaningful training with foreseeable future that contains employment of some sort is the way to go. People do want to work and not be on welfare.
- Jealousy between communities and people are creating problems even within families.

"It's not easy being a role model grandparent, we have to watch our steps and maintain balance, but we have to do it, we need to set a good example for the young people."

- Housing concerns are the same as most northern communities, there are not enough and the 25% rental amount is too much.
- High cost of living, even with a road into the community, no competition allows only grocery outlet to charge prices higher than a location such as Buffalo Narrows or La Loche.
- We need to have parents more involved with their families. without their participation. the community can never have an ability to discipline them according to their values and principles.

Social programs:

- The social worker comes from Buffalo Narrows. Patuanak is a low case community so the

worker comes around when needed. The community would like to see their own worker in the community, they can then look at dispersing their own program with the emphasis being to get people off of welfare and to become independent again.

- New Careers provides jobs only during the summer months, this should not be combined with SERM and the community needs to control the program and who can work through the program.
- SES, more information needed on this program.
- Childcare and protection, there is a program on the English River Reserve. There is a need to combine efforts so those band members living off reserve can benefit from the program as well. Further to that, a program such as this should be for every child, not just one sector.
- Foster home, elder care facilities, safe homes and shelters are mostly on reserve or out of town, people have to leave the community for these services, it is pertinent that they be available closer to home.
- In the justice area, the community would like to sign and negotiate participation in the English River Band's Justice Program.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Relationship between band and community.
- Provide more opportunities for youth hire more recreation workers and establish better programs in the community.
- People need to be well before they can help each other, overcome barriers and begin healing programs.

Future goals and aspirations:

- To become healthy again with jobs and opportunities for everyone.
- Revive traditional values and goals, keeping in mind what our grandparents taught us.
- Treat each other as equals.
- Establish more community-based programs such as social services, housing and others.
- Close the generation gap between the elders and youth.

Patuanak leaders are very involved in the community, they care for the people they work for. Without adequate resources and an ability to control more things in the community, it's hard for leadership to fairly represent their communities. That's the ultimate goal, to control one's destiny in one's own office under one's own rules.

17 Pelican Narrows-population 500

Community visits July 14, 1998 and November 17, 1998.

Close to the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, Pelican Narrows is part of the bigger centers in the north. The reserve has a population of over 2500 people while the village has about 500 people. Most of the people are also Bill C-31.

A community on the verge of change, Pelican Narrows has experienced many changes over the past fifty years. people in the community have adapted to both the modern and traditional lifestyles. Some people continue to trap and commercial fish to supplement their incomes.

Other people work on various projects around the community. Even with all that activity, both the band and community experience an unemployment rate of around 80%, with the available jobs coming from seasonal employment.

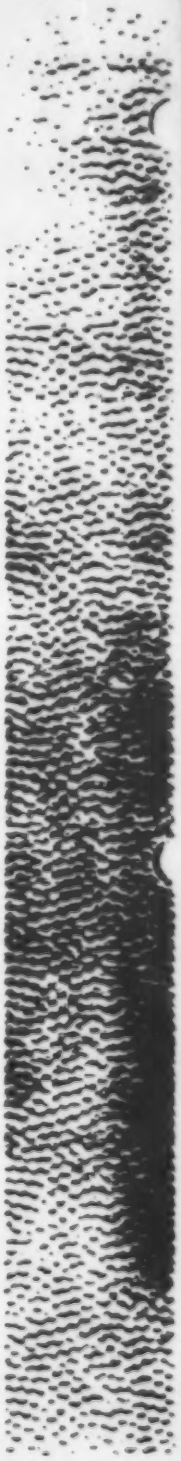
Issues of Concern:

A growing community experiences many changes, both positive and negative. In the case of Pelican Narrows high unemployment creates many social ills. We had a chance to hear some of these concerns.

- Alcohol and drug abuse is a major concern in the community, there is an increase in the amount of usage.
- Family violence, teen pregnancy and youth crime are all on the increase and people want to begin a process of dealing with all of those issues to combat them.
- Inadequate training opportunities and lack of jobs also create many more problems than the community can handle, all of which create more reliance on the social system.
- Relationships between different government departments and the band also create some minor problems as well. The community itself does not have the capacity to handle programs on their own. Meanwhile the band has programs that they deliver to band members living off reserve, for example social assistance is delivered through an agreement between the province and the band.

As we heard from the leaders in the community during our visit there, they told us this:

> *"We know what our problems are, we live with them everyday and we can fix them ourselves."*
>
> *-Pelican Narrows, Nov. 1998.*



Social programs:

Since 1994, the band has administered social services programs to band members living in Pelican Narrows. The program is delivered through social services policy, this seems to be working with the exception of how non-treaty people are treated, they sometimes have to travel to La Ronge or Creighton for services and this creates problems for them. Travel to these communities is not always easy to do.

- People in the community also have access to various Social program initiatives such as New Careers, Saskatchewan Employment Supplement and Post Secondary Allowance programs. They would like to see more people come into the community to educate people about these programs and how to access them.
- In the area of child protection and childcare, the community is aware of the band's Indian Child Family Service program, they need more information on that though, so that they can become more involved in this service delivery area. They would prefer to have the children stay in the community and not be taken away when they've been apprehended.
- For resources such as foster homes, elder care and so on, Pelican Narrows residents feel that their community lacks many of these essential services. The would like to see more foster care program development in community.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- The biggest obstacle that must be overcome for Pelican Narrows is probably in the area of service delivery, with little or no involvement in this sector, that leadership find themselves at odds sometimes with the current system. The community would like to establish a process of involvement.
- Encourage people to become more involved in community development, there is a need to get more people who use the language to become more involved in any community development activity.
- Community based healing initiatives must be begun according to the wishes and aspirations of the people. For example, the band has a program for this and people can not be forced into taking part. They must undertake that movement on their own.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Establish community based healing initiative.
- Work on establishing stronger working relationships with the band and try and get some benefit out of the programs now delivered by them.

- People need to be encouraged to get on with their own lives and not continue to be dependent on everyone else to get things done for them.
- The need to hire more of the community people is a definite one. the community is experiencing an influx of more educated people coming home. Both the band and the community need to ensure that there are jobs for these people.
- The region needs to develop a strong economic development strategy to look at all facets of getting into business. these include fishing, tourism and forestry.

"It's not a hopeless situation, once we begin to build our pride and self esteem, our people will rise up again. Then the goals of creating viable businesses such as fishing, trapping and hunting will continue to be a part of our lives, our land is rich in resources."

-Pelican Narrows, July 1998.

Community visit took place during July 3rd and November 12th, 1998.

Pinehouse is located in the central part of northern Saskatchewan. It is rich in culture with little European influence. The community is mostly Cree/Metis with some First Nations.

Like all other communities, Pinehouse Lake has had its share with the social problems. Here again, because of the unemployment situation they are inactive and this leads to unhealthy lifestyle and choices.

The lifestyle of their ancestors is being replaced with a system, which has and is creating a dependent generation.

Pinehouse residents want to be given a chance to have control over what happens in their community.

Pinehouse has prominent businesses in the community. They provide employment, but more is needed if we are going to move away from dependent to independence.

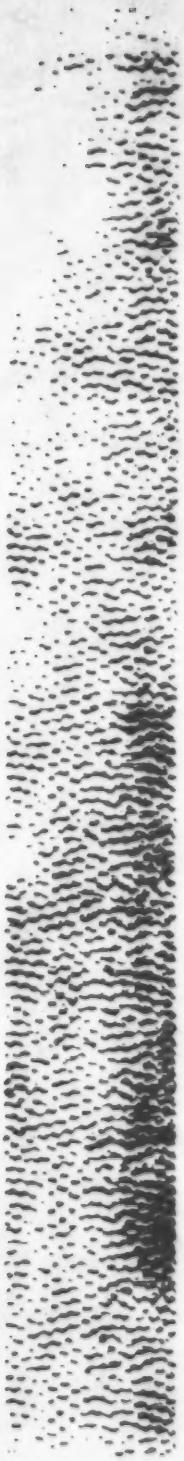
Issues of Concern:

The community was very vocal about the past, current and present social and economic situation. The community is faced with all the social problems with limited resources. It has identified a skilled human resource base, which they can tap into if needed.

- In the area of housing, there is a need to change the policy to reflect the current needs of the northern communities.
- More funding is needed for initiatives that are in place.
- The local childcare center has to be controlled more by local people.

Social programs:

- In the family service delivery area, this program is delivered through the La Ronge office.
- There is a push to have a community-based social worker to deliver some of the programs in Pinehouse.
- The community wants the ability to have a say and control over the childcare center.
- The community response team is there to help any people in need.
- The community would like a family counseling system put into place.
- The establishment of partnership based on communities.
- To establish a protocol in regards to apprehension and placement of children, more community control in this area.
- To have a youth services worker in the village. There is a need to have a role model, mentor



and friend who can guide and direct the youth through planned activities, as well as one to one counseling and group work.

- The need to plan and develop a northern youth healing lodge has to be undertaken immediately.
- More prevention and awareness programs are needed in Pinehouse.
- In the foster and community homes sector, the community would like to have existing resources expanded. The need to work together with Saskatchewan Foster Parents Association, government and locals.
- Current policies are getting in the way of delivering Income security to community programs. The community would like to establish their own regulations to deliver their own programs.
- Would like to have their own local workers who understand and know the people.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Community based justice initiatives are needed. this can be done through the utilization of a model such as the "restorative justice model."
- A current systematic barrier such as government policy gets in the way of community progress.

"If we don't see any changes in this area, you're going to see more civil disobedience. people are fed up. they're going to block roads if the government does not listen to us."

- The need to establish more northern based programs for disabled people, whether they be young or trying to make it on their own.

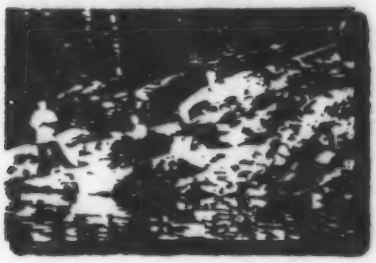
Future goals and aspirations:

- The community would like to see local based social workers to deliver the services to their people.
- The rates for disabled people need to reflect the cost of living factor in the north. As well, a physiotherapist is needed closer to the community.
- The need to have more say on how programs such as New Careers is administered.
- More government funding for local initiatives.
- A northern-based healing lodge is needed for the residents.
- The 25% housing rental amount needs to be addressed.
- More elder care facilities are needed in the north.

Pinehouse is a progressive community with strengths and weaknesses. The community has highly motivated individuals who are eager to mobilize the residents.

Pinehouse will benefit, once the community development workers are in place. They have a vision for their community and with extra support they will be able to address most of the current social problems.

Community visits July 14th and November 18th. 1998



Sandy Bay is located along the Churchill River is home to Island Falls Hydro Station owned and operated by Sask Power Corporation. There are ancient pictographs near the community that people visit on occasion.

The community is made up of Cree/Metis and First Nations.

Sandy Bay is no different when it comes to social problems. When an individual is faced with 95% unemployment the social problems will escalate.

The resources are limited on the human service side. The potential is there for training as they have identified skilled individuals who can do that work.

The community has very few local business owners the few who do, offer employment to a few people.

Issues of Concern:

- Negative youth activity needs to be addressed.
- People don't want to be on assistance, they want to have equal opportunities such as jobs and so on.
- The 25% housing policy for rental units issue has to be addressed. there is a further need to have units for single people. More affordable housing needed in the community. there are some houses overflowing with people.
- Social Workers need to be more understanding, respectful and show concern for the people.
- The New Careers program needs to be more flexible and reflect the community needs.
- In the Family Services department of Social programs, the current process of delivery out of Creighton is inadequate. Would prefer to have local people deliver these programs.
- A protocol needs to be established to deal with apprehension and placement of young people.
- In the youth services sector. the people who deliver the program come out of La Ronge and Creighton Sandy Bay would like to have their worker living in the community.

"The youth are our future. we need to guide them now."

- A northern healing lodge should be established in the north.
- For foster care and community homes, there is minimum service there now and they would like to review the process to define whether these services are provided with northern focused policies.
- The Income Security program is inadequate and not acceptable.

"The treatment by social workers to our people will no longer be tolerated. there are complaints that people have been harassed and have been shown disrespect."

- The community would like to deliver their own program and hire a local person to administer it.

Future goals and aspirations:

- The whole issue of housing from a northern standpoint needs to be addressed, for example the 25% policy needs to be revamped and has to reflect the northern needs.
- Welfare rates are far too low to meet the needs of single parents.
- Elders in the community need adequate facilities. They also need assistance financially and with health coverage.
- Need to establish support groups for people in need.

"My own daughter was sexually abused by her brother. when I wanted to deal with it. the police told me they couldn't help me right away and told me to come back later. I said, no, I want it dealt with right away. Then they did....My own family said I should not be doing what I'm doing. who do I turn to, when I dealt with this matter I was alone. I needed help, where was it?"

-Sandy Bay -November. 1998

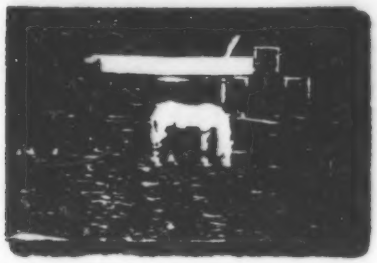
- With the amount of sexual and physical abuse disclosures. the community would like to develop a local human resource team.

Sled Lake-Population 20 and about 30 cabin owners

20

Community visits-July 20th 1998 and November 9th, 1998.

A small picturesque community on the shores of Sled Lake, the community is mostly made up of Cree, Metis and non-native descent. During the summer months, the community doubles in size when a lot of the southern cabin owners come up and stay for the summer. By northern standards, Sled Lake still has many opportunities, people still carry on with traditional vocations such hunting, fishing and trapping. Many people grow gardens and prepare vegetables for winter months. Employment is seasonal and work can be found by those interested in attaining it.



Issues of Concern:

- Youth crime, family violence, alcohol and drug abuse is of major concern for the residents of Sled Lake.
- Poverty and lack of job opportunities are other concerns. There is a feeling that people can work and should work if they have an opportunity to do so.
- Lack of decision-makers at the community level. Too much government control over the lives of people. They need to be able to make their own decisions.
- There is concern over abuse of the government system by people on welfare, there is a need to teach these people how to spend their money more wisely.
- Southern policies don't always work in the north, there is a need to develop more northern focused policies.
- The quality of water from the lake is inadequate. The community needs to have a water treatment facility installed for their system.

Social programs:

- Programs are delivered from the regional office in Meadow Lake.
- There is concern over the abuse of the welfare system. People need to work first before they turn to welfare.
- Moral values are gone because of the current system.
- More information needed on various social programs currently in place such as New Careers, SES and Post Secondary Training Allowance program etc.
- Child protection and child care is delivered out of Meadow Lake and the concern here is, poor response time by workers. There is a feeling that the kids of the community are its business and that they have to take care of the kids themselves.
- Foster homes, therapeutic homes, elder care, safe home shelters are all available in Meadow Lake or Big River and people have to travel there to receive those services. The community would like to have more foster homes in the community.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Development of a community plan that should include facets of economic development relevant to the region, for example, tourism getting licenses to run outfitting, getting increased fishing quotas. Mechanized forestry equipment taking jobs away from people in the forestry business etc.
- Establish better working relationship between the community and various government department on delivery of services.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Establish proper filtration system for water service.
- Look at raising game and fish farms for harvesting purposes.
- Allow community to regain more control in family matters, for example, discipline should be done the parents.
- Develop a strong economic development strategy to include everything from forestry to tourism.

"We need to have our community more involved in our town, we have small functions such as a Christmas party and yet we find ourselves distant from each other. Volunteerism is not here, we need to encourage growth in that area. If people want jobs, they're out there, they just need to go after them."

-Sled Lake July 1998.

Stanley Mission-Population 50. 1500 people living on the Reserve.

Community visits June 24th. 1998.

Situated along the mighty Churchill River, Stanley Mission is home to one the oldest buildings in Saskatchewan the Anglican Holy Trinity Church was built around the 1850's and has been continuously used since.

About 1500 mostly Cree speaking people live in the community, a big part of the community members are part of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band. the rest about fifty, live on the Metis side of the settlement.

Because the larger band is situated close to the Metis side, there is a jurisdictional barrier between the two. Most services are provided to band members and non-members on the non-reserve side are usually left to fend for themselves.

Issues of concern:

Unemployment ranks high here as well. close to 85% of the people who live in Stanley Mission are on welfare. Again this causes social upheaval in the community, drug and alcohol and abuse rank high in the list of social ills. Many of the people who once lived on the land now live in the community.

With this increasing population, residents in Stanley Mission feel these are the main areas of concern for them:

- Alcohol and drug abuse includes crime. Poverty, community safety inadequate training opportunities lack of meaningful employment are all high on the list of concerns.
- Other matters of concern include family violence, breakdown and jurisdictional barriers between communities.
- Teen pregnancy, high school dropout rate and poverty top off the list.

According to residents of the community, all services are provided on the reserve side of the community and none on their side. This is creating rifts in the community, although access is allowed, it's hard for them to fit into this system.

Social Programs:

- Child protection and Childcare programs are non-existent on the non-reserve side. community members have limited access only.
- Youth services none.
- Income support. general feeling that resources are not adequate. cost of living too high. Prefer to have more job opportunities in order to become less reliant on social assistance.
- Community members would like to see the RCMP more visible and able to assist whenever

called, would like to partake in police management board meetings. Train more young people to work in this field.
- Need more information about social programs to explain the benefits to the average individual living in Stanley Mission.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

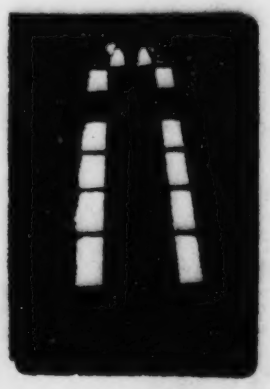
- Establish working relationships with leadership on reserve side to provide adequate services for non-reserve members for example, child family services, elder care and so on.
- Elect good working leaders to work on behalf of the community. They would be chosen on their leadership capabilities and to be able to conduct community developments workshops and to train people in the different areas of community growth.
- Begin journey towards healing.
- People need to talk and listen to each other, get leaders and government to listen to people.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Get more young people involved in politics?
- Get involved in the policy planning of any future development for the region.
- Get more meaningful training opportunities for the people.
- Establish workshops in the area family healing and issues pertinent to that.

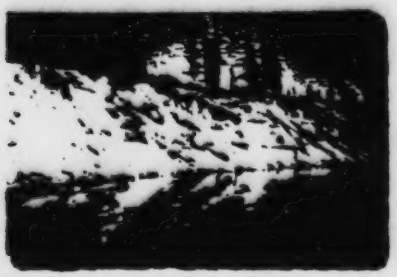
All in all, most of the young population in Stanley Mission are hopeful that the future will brighter for them and their children than what they've experienced up to now. Change is imminent and it now rests with the young people on what will be in store for them.

Other communities in the La Ronge region we were not able to visit were Missinippi, Brabant Lake and Southend. Missinippi is a small resort community with a transient population and other people whom live there are self-reliant. Brabant Lake and Southend are both heavily involved in the transfer of authority from the province to the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation.



Stony Rapids-Population 2"0 includes First Nations from Black Lake Reserve

Situated on the eastern end of Lake Athabasca. Stony Rapids is home to Dene Metis and non-aboriginal peoples.



Established earlier this century, as a fur trading post for the hunters and trappers from the barren lands, Stony Rapids has been the hub of activity for the region.

Despite being in the shadows of Uranium City for many years, Stony Rapids is now facing a resurgence of activity and is slowly moving ahead into being an administrative centre for the region.

Plans are now underway to build a regional health facility and development work in community infrastructure is pretty well underway.

Issues of Concern:

The community is not immune to the social ills of the north. alcohol. drug and physical abuse are here as well.

- Would like to have more people trained and off of welfare.
- Healing has to happen by northern leaders and people. Break the cycle before it repeats itself.
- Government programs should be delivered through offices located in Stony Rapids.
- Housing shortage and problems with Saskatchewan housing.

Social programs:

- Social Assistance Program currently being delivered through Social Services and an arrangement with the Black Lake Band.
- Need more education on various programs available through system.
- SES program should include northern cost of living factor.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Develop community model for healing.
- Partnership arrangement between band and community for service delivery.
- Eliminate cost of freight factor. so everyone pays the same amount for groceries.
- Electricity rates are too high now. everyone should pay the same regardless of how much they use.

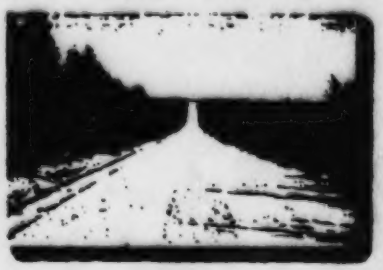
Future goals and aspirations:

- Lobby for a northern freight subsidy program to supplement food costs.
- Explore welfare reform. people should be encouraged to work that should include training and education. Register people everywhere, so that they can find a job and lastly provide services only to people who really need it like disabled or single parents.
- Social Service dollars could be combined with other business dollars to create joint ventures and opportunities for meaningful employment for people.
- Establish school nutrition programs.
- Revitalize community volunteerism.
- A northern based correction facility for everyone, the current system contaminates people rather than helps them.

"For example, if we have our elders working with the people in jail. they can get help in dene. something they don't have down south."

-Stony Rapids. September 1998.

Stony Rapids is growing and the young people need to have opportunities their parents did not have. The people strongly feel that the welfare system has to be broken in the north and the way to do that would be to create more jobs.



Community visits on following days July 7th and Oct 21st, 1998.

Located on the western shores of Peter Pond Lake west of Buffalo Narrows, the community is mostly made up dene who have live here since the late 1960's. At one time, commercial fishing and trapping around the lake provided many people the opportunity to provide an adequate life for them.

Because of changes over the years, the traditional ways of life are pretty well gone. discipline is no longer around. young people have lost touch with the elders and there is a generation gap between the two.

There is a feeling that young people think they know more than their elders do. The community wants to begin a process of finding itself again, with the emphasis being on healing and bringing the community back together again.

It is situated close to the Buffalo River Dene Nation and most of the community members have regained treaty status through the federal legislation Bill C-31. This is creating a jurisdictional impasse for many members who wish to relocate back onto reserve. Families on both sides feel there is a gap between them. they blame government policy and regulations for imposing those laws upon the affected people.

Issues of concern:

There is a feeling of discontent in the village and people wonder what to do about their younger people. It seems that discipline is lax and there is an ever-widening generation gap.

> *"Our young people don't respect us anymore, they don't listen to us and we need to bring back our own form of discipline. People used to rely on the wisdom and respect of our elders. everyone had to listen to what they had to say. We need that again. then we can teach through discipline that work is better than welfare."*
>
> *- St Georges Hill-October 21st, 1998*

The task and goal of the community now is to tackle some of these issues that concern them most,

- Drug and alcohol abuse creates other problems such as family violence and neglect.
- Unemployment and lack of good opportunities are high on the list.
- Lack of adequate community infrastructure and resources to expand or control activity at the community level.
- Loss of community and moral values, people are lying to attain social services.
- Teen pregnancy and other social problems are of immediate concern too.

- Inter-jurisdictional between the community and outlying communities has to be dealt with and worked out. For example, the band next door has access to all kinds of good programs and they don't. Protocols between the two should be negotiated.

Social programs:

Most of the programming for community members comes out of Buffalo Narrows regional office and they are:

- Social Assistance, which is not enough, the high cost of living and travel to outlying communities to buy basic sustenance needs creates undue hardship for recipients.
- New Careers programs is there for social services recipients but the selection process for people working in the system is not community driven and that has to change. people who are not on social assistance should have the same opportunity to qualify for those jobs too. More people need to be encouraged to work. it seems that welfare treats people better than those who want to work for themselves.
- Post Secondary Training Allowance is not readily available to people in the community, especially to those people who regained Treaty status through Bill C-31.
- Childcare programs are needed. the community would like to develop more homes for fostering and devise a community development plan to meet those needs.
- Health care for elders who hold the "y" card have to be dealt with in a proper manner, local taxis from the community should be used to transport people for health care when they travel outside of the community.

"We heard of many times when people have to wait all day to get to their health appointments in the south. Then they have to wait again before they come home. Sometimes these taxis don't have adequate health equipment and people have died because of that. We need proper health care transportation for our people when travel."

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- The jurisdictional barrier between the community and the province and with the band must be dealt with immediately.
- Need more community leaders to lead the people, not follow them around.
- Better communication between government, leadership and community members.

Future goals and aspirations:

- More affordable housing built by the community, owned by the community and run by them.
- Address community issues in the area of healing from their standpoint and involvement. For example, how to deal with alcohol and drug problems, family violence and teen pregnancy through community forums. How to help people with terminal illnesses such as cancer and so on.
- Education has to be encouraged for young and older people. parenting and nutritional classes must be run here.

There is a feeling amongst people in St. Georges Hill that the government neglects them and more needs to be done.

"We pay our taxes. why can't we get more? Is it because we are native that we are lower class? I just don't know."

-St Georges Hill-Oct 21st. 1998

24 Timber Bay-population under 100

Our visits occurred there in June for the first phase. November for the second phase.

Timber Bay is a small Cree Metis Community on the eastern shore of Montreal Lake.

The people have lived in this area for a long time. According to community leaders, most of the people are reliant on the social assistance system to sustain them. There is an elected mayor and alder people. some of them are on welfare. Timber Bay was one of several of the communities we encountered. which was in that situation.

The community made up of mostly Cree Metis derive other livelihoods from trapping. fishing and limited forestry activity in their region and a few government jobs and programs provide for the rest. In all. 98% of the people do not work full time. Close to one hundred people live in Timber Bay.

With a young population. greater emphasis is required for proper training initiatives that will greatly benefit the whole community. Only if this is done then the young people will learn to become more self reliant getting people over the poverty line.

Issues of concern in Timber Bay:

- Housing-contractors don't sub-contract to local people.
- Social Services workers lack knowledge in program areas and are not working closely with local people. services not always provided in Cree, there is a need to hire workers who understand and know the needs of people by understanding their languages. etc.
- Self-sufficiency is a dream, we have to wake up to the realities of life. Government policies have to change to reflect wants and needs of northerners. Metis and municipal organizations need more say and opportunity to be fully involved. Without that promises are usually broken.
- Like other northern communities poverty and lack of opportunities are making people lie and cheat in order to meet requirements to attain welfare, leaving traditional practices behind. Values are distorted and need to be changed back.
- First Nations and other northern people need to combine efforts in order to achieve goals and aspirations.

Social programs available in Timber Bay:

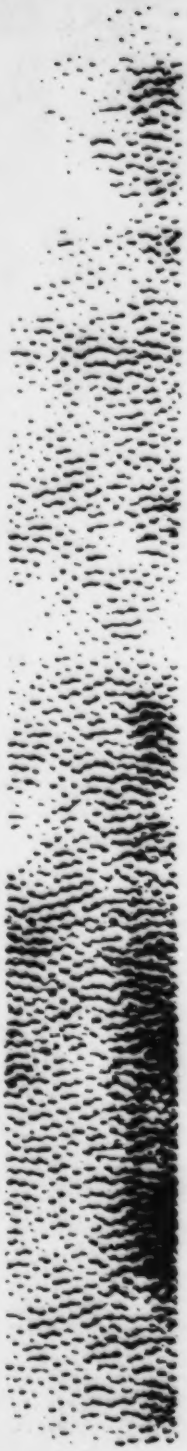
- Training programs are available through educational institutions such as SIAST or Northlands College people usually have to travel out of town for those and success is limited because of that. Need to have ability to have programs right in community.
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse programs.
- Very limited programs because of the population size.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Need to establish advocacy system to take care of people who need to have complaints addressed in appeals.
- Currently there are limited or no foster care facilities in community. There is a need to establish community homes to take care of children who need it. Right now, people take care of their own community. They open their homes to kids in need when they have no where else to go.
- Men who abandon their kids because of the lack of or employment opportunities need to be encouraged to uphold their parental responsibilities.
- Community needs healing. Timber Bay must undertake and assume that responsibility. Individuals who are interested could be trained to become facilitators and to be able to share that experience with other people in the community.
- Government policy doesn't always work in the north, for example housing and other related matters. It's hard to set up northern safe homes and homes for children etc because of the rules etc.
- Right now Timber Bay residents get some government services out of Prince Albert and others from La Ronge. For example, the community is part of the La Ronge Health Board. The residents would like to have centralized services.
- Timber Bay is in the former Northern Administration District (NAD), they prefer to receive all the northern-based services and to continue to be a part of the north and to be able to get the same benefits as the rest of the north.
- Forestry companies now working in traditional land use area not always cooperative and do not provide ample opportunity to local people, for example, tree planting.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Northern housing development strategy. Do away with 25% rental policy. Devise more effective means of applying rent to people who work and live in Saskatchewan housing.
- Community members want to see government policies changed to reflect wants and needs. For example, taking on social programs, community leaders would like the opportunity to have that.
- Need own community justice strategy with staff etc.
- Adequate resources to fund above-mentioned initiatives.
- The teen pregnancy rate is increasing. Timber Bay needs workers to help educate young mothers and control this increasing trend.



- Better education in the area of programs. people should conduct workshops with residents. This can be done through community meetings and workshops etc.
- Establish various committees. health and social development committees. etc.
- Devise a "Timber Bay Economic Development Plan." That could include: forestry, tourism. fishing and other resource related industry.
- Overcome jurisdictional barrier between Metis and Treaty people. They need to integrate various programs to provide on an equal basis. programs for all people including elders. youth, women and other programs of common interest to all.

All in all. Timber Bay is beginning a process of inclusion. Through their leadership and other community interest groups, awareness is slowly creeping into their lives. It's a picturesque part of the north. The spoils of the south have not reached this northern community and it likely won't change either.

They just need an opportunity to be able to take care of their own needs and aspirations. A notable quote from there reads:

> *"If agencies would take the time to find out people's situations before they start trying to help it would be beneficial to all parties involved."*
>
> *- Timber Bay-June 22. 1998*

Community visits August 12th. 1998 and (October 23rd. 1998 this meeting was cancelled due to lack of interest)

> *"Many times we call meetings here in our community to talk about common issues and this is what happens, nobody shows up, maybe it's because they're sick and tired of talking about their problems and nothing happening as a result of it."*
>
> *-Mayor Ivan Morin, Turnor Lake*

Turnor Lake is one of the newer communities in the region. Most of the dene/Metis and Cree people came from the surrounding communities of La Loche, Patuanak and Buffalo Narrows.

Before moving into Turnor Lake, people lived at Clear Lake, a traditional community a short distance away. People lived off the land, fishing, trapping and hunting which provided well for the people in Clear Lake. The government promised schools, housing and better opportunities and invited people to move to Turnor Lake.

Issues of Concern:

- Drug alcohol abuse is a big concern in the community. This also includes family violence, youth crime and unemployment that is about 90%. Gambling and housing are also two big concerns for the people of Turnor Lake.
- The lack of a high school in the community is a worry for parents who have to send their kids to school away from the community, because of this, the success rate for people completing school is not very high.

Social programs:

- Social service workers come from Buffalo Narrows to deliver the program, prefer to have individuals come from the La Loche office.
- Other programs include, Child Benefit Programs, New Careers for fire fighting and Post-Secondary Training Allowance.
- In the child protection and child care areas, the community feels that it's not a big concern at the present time.
- Foster Homes, therapeutic homes, elder care facilities and safe homes and shelters are non existent in Turnor Lake. The community would like to see more community-based programs of this nature available to them.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Develop a community development model to overcome the obstacles.
- Have social worker come out of La Loche.
- Establish working relationship with the band for joint delivery of common services such as child welfare and so on.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Have a police officer in the community.
- Develop a community justice initiative.
- Establish adequate housing for people in the community.
- Develop plan for taking on programs at the community level for people who live in Turnor Lake for example, a housing authority and social program.

"Generally we believe that the government is doing a good job for northerners, but we need to be allowed the space to develop our own programs for our people. In the old days, we had many jobs which were available on a seasonal basis, we need those same opportunities again."

-Turnor Lake, Aug 1998.

The community of Turnor Lake has goals and aspirations to become self-sufficient some day. They know that there will be limited opportunities in the forestry area and perhaps smaller based fishing initiatives. By developing a good economic plan for the future. The leadership believe that it can be accomplished.

Community visit Sept 10, 1998

Once a thriving mining community, Uranium City is still home to a remnant of what the town was, from almost three thousand people in its heyday, two hundred people now live there. They are Dene, Cree, Metis and non-aboriginal peoples.

The town is now pretty well run down and many of the community buildings are now beginning to feel the ravages of times. There are still a couple of businesses there along with a hospital that is slated to close in the next couple of years.

Government services are now pretty well provided from Stony Rapids or La Ronge.

Issues of Concern:

- The high cost of living is a major concern for the northern residents.
- Continuation of medical services to people of the community when the hospital closes. Need to look at other uses for facility, perhaps a northern treatment centre or jail are options.
- Would like to have medical travel subsidized.

"It costs us more to go to Saskatoon than it does to go to Hawaii from Saskatoon, what's going on, why does it cost so much to live up here?"

-Uranium City, September 1998.

Social programs:

- SAP comes out of La Ronge, dependency rate is low. Most work in the community or at the mines.
- Housing is not a shortage in the community.
- Most programs are delivered by outside agencies or the Metis local.
- Would like to use New Careers dollars to work in community.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- The community is still facing a re-adjustment phase from the time that the mine shut down in 1981 until today.
- Establish educational programs for people on welfare, to teach them to better budget their money and so on.

Future goals and aspirations:

- More money to clean up the town and to begin demolishing abandoned houses and to salvage materials for resale.
- Would like to have more training programs in the Athabasca Basin communities.
- People need extra help when travelling for medical purposes down south.
- The establishment of a northern food basket, to compare the cost of living in the north to the south.
- To explore local control of different programs such as social services and other services for the people in Uranium City.

Uranium City has gone through many phases in the past fifty years of existence, from boom to bust. During the bust cycle of the past twenty years, the people continue to live there because they like the north and what it has to offer. Some people have moved south, only to come home to Uranium City. There is fear that the town will die once the hospital shuts down. The adamant residents say:

"Regardless of whatever happens beyond that date, we will continue to live here, it's our home."

27. Weyakwin-population under 200

Community visit on June 22, 1998 and November 16, 1998

A mostly Cree Metis community, in the 1970's people were relocated from the eastern shore of Montreal Lake to Weyakwin. Molanosa was once home to the people. When a new road was constructed along the west shore of the lake, people were invited to move to a new location with housing, schools and all the amenities of life, including alcohol, drugs and other things which began eroding people's spirits.

Social problems began shortly after the move. Alcohol and drug abuse became rampant and is still a big concern today. Housing and health problems began cropping up as well, since some of the units contained creosote a dangerous wood preservative. Community leaders are fearful that some of the ill health side affects may be related to these contaminated units, some of which have been condemned. Other vocations of providing a livelihood for the people slowly died off too. Trapping and commercial fishing is on the decline and not too many people do that anymore.

The local saw mill provides a few jobs, but the supervisor does not work well with the people. There are other jobs but those are far and few in between. Close to half the people work in forest-related industries. More jobs opportunities are needed though. Tourism and other related businesses provide other part-time work for the people.

There are some other small businesses in the community and people are involved in them as well.

Issues of concern:

- Alcohol and drug abuse rank high as major concerns of contention. People mostly drink on weekends or whenever there is money in the community, for example when firefighters come back etc. There is fear too, that more and more young people are turning to alcohol and drugs too. This creates friction between families and puts rifts in the community.
- Too many young people turning to abuse of alcohol, drugs and other mind-numbing substances.
- Contaminated housing units need to be fixed up. Drop the 25% rental clause so people can work and still provide a home for their families. Under the current system, people sometimes pay too much for a unit and it's easier just to live off welfare than work.
- Social workers from La Ronge don't come around enough and when they do, their attitudes are causing concern for us.
- Unemployment or lack of good opportunities creates other problems such as vandalism and violence etc.
- More say in the delivery of "fine option and new careers program," too much control at the government levels in these areas.

Social Programs:

- Child protection and childcare usually taken care of by social workers need to be more involved in the decision making.
- Not enough youth services in Weyakwin. The community was not aware of the Youth Services program before 1998. A youth worker needs to be more visible in the community.
- No foster homes in the community. They need homes to take care kids closer to home. training needed in this area too.
- Generally supportive of current process of income support with the exception of social worker concerns. Would like opportunity to run own program at their level, make decisions etc.

Obstacles that must be overcome:

- Community based justice initiatives are needed such as, family mediators. sentencing circles and other related programs.
- Inter-jurisdictional barriers. government policy gets in way of community progress.
- Adequate access to pertinent information about various programs available through government agencies.
- Not enough training opportunities. Northlands College or the Jim Brady Economic Development Counseling services could be more visible and provide those opportunities.

Future goals and aspirations:

- Better economic development opportunities in the forestry, fishing and resource based sectors. For example: there is a saw mill and chism log plant there. but an economic development strategy is very much needed. That must be implemented immediately.
- Have elders more visible in community activities, i.e. getting them together with young people to teach them about our ways, crafts, language etc.
- Maintain community values of healing, helping and feeding each other during times of need. Retain respect for each other etc.
- Establish training programs in the area of family values, drug and alcohol abuse etc.
- Establish Economic Development and Social Justice Committees.
- Encourage Social Services to be more visible in the community.

During our community meeting in Weyakwin, there was a lot of concern towards the youth,

> *"We need to encourage our youth to be proud of themselves and to hold onto their ways. we can't lose them. We need them to carry on our ways for future generations."*
>
> *-Weyakwin-Nov 16th. 1998*

The community of Weyakwin wants to become more progressive in the area of business development. They too. like the people around them. need to be a part of a bigger process to develop economic development on a north wide scale.

Appendix "B"

Issues Common to Northern Communities

Appendix B - Issues Common to Northern Communities

1. Housing and Municipal Government

a Sub contracting to local people to create employment. /T-1.
b 25% rental policy and establish community based local housing authorities and to encourage home ownership. /Sa-14, G-2, Sa-3, Bea-2, Pin-25, T-13
c Financial resources to expand and maintain infrastructure and administration services. / St.3. T-20. A-16.
d Clean up or demolish contaminated houses in community. /W-3.
e Insufficient housing - 25%. /Sl-3. P-4.
f Housing built. owned and managed by community. /St-15.
g More recreation programs-recreation workers. /Cr-1. G-1. P-14.
h Community Based Housing programs. /P-19.
i Increase government operating grants to northern communities. / G-15.
j More youth activities needed. / B-1.
k 25% rental rate too much. need flat rate for north. Remote housing program does not help low income families. /Do-2. B-3.
l Community planning issues. establish non-smoking by laws for youth under 18 years old. /Cr-12.
m Develop and implement curfew by law. /Cr-13.
n Community needs to have water treatment and filtration system installed. /Sl-6 & 15.
o Insufficient housing. /La-2 & 12. De-8. T-1 & 12.
p Water and sewer septic systems and housing needed. /Bl-2.
q Inadequate community operating budget (smaller communities overlooked). /Bl-4. De-7.
r Lack of home ownership, people being evicted from own lands. /Bl-5 & 12.
s Need better septic system. /De-4.
t Housing exists and problems with Sask Housing. Sto-5.
u Electricity rates are too high everyone should pay same. /Sto-12.
v Change current housing policy to meet needs of the north. /Pin-1.
w Increase funding for current initiatives now in place. /Pin-2 & 23.
x Need housing units for single people. /Sa-3.

2. Delivery of Services

a Language and cultural barriers including knowledge of programs and time and respect. /T-2.
b Local delivery of services. /T-9.
c One administrative centre for each community. /T-14 & 15.
d More information about various government programs and policies. /S-9, T-22, Pe-6, Sl-10.
e Attitudes of workers. /Sa-4. C-8. W-4.
f More awareness of youth services. /W-8.

g Information about different programs i.e. SES and child benefit program. /St-7, W-13, P-9, De-6, Do-5, La-9.
h Low visibility of DSS which should be directed towards community based workers. /W-20, G-7 &3.
i Regular report. /G-5.
j Mistrust of workers. /G-7.
k Youth Services need to be more visible. /G-10.
l DSS need broader mandate beyond health and safety of child, need to look at health and safety of family and community. /B-6, Bea-6.
m Policies need to reflect goals and aspirations. /I-5.
n Coordination between service delivery agencies. /I-17.
o Complaints of harassment and disrespect by social workers. /Sa-12.
p Not enough youth workers. /B-7.
q Non treaty residents not getting services they need. /Pe-9.
r Workers need to come on a regular basis to community. Need to show more compassion. /J-4.
s Program workers need to be more visible in community. /J-14.
t Program workers need to be more visible in community. /J-6 &14, Bea-10, Cu-10.
u Need more services on Saskatchewan side. /Cr-10.
v Response time poor, paternalistic attitude of workers. /Sl-11.
w Definition of discipline vs abuse is needed. /Sl1-17.
x DSS programs are limited. /Do-3.
y Better communication between agencies i.e. policing - social services. /La-18.
z Programs are too far away. /De-2.
aa Need high school - drop out rate too high. /T-2.
bb Want services from La Loche Office. /T-3 & 8.
cc Need local delivery of programs and workers. /Sto-4.

3. Shared Policy Responsibility.

a Government policies and regulations are barriers to community progress. /J-10, Sl-3.
b Community plan to take more control of government programs. /U-6 & 14, I-12, Cu- 13 & 14, Bl-8 & 9, J-10.
c. Delivery of Family Service programs by communities. /I-21, Cu-8.
d Establish better working relationship between community and government to deliver programs. /Sl-14.
e Community control of programs, housing and social. /T-13.
f. Current policies not working. /Pin-15.
g Community wants to establish own regulations. /Pin-18.
h Existing policies for foster and community homes are not adequate. /Sa-10.
i. Involvement in decision making, partnership and shared responsibilities. /B-15, J-1, Pin-9.
j. Inappropriate policy distorts values and morals. /St-4, T-4, SL-9.
k. Policy change and standards change to reflect northern conditions. /SL-5, T-13, Cu-6.
l. Involvement in running programs. /T1-18.
m Run own programs. Community control. /L-7, W-10.
n Partnerships needed between municipalities and government. /L-21.

o People need to be heard. /S-13.
p Community involved in planning for future development. /S-15.
q Communication between government, leadership and community. /St-14.
r. Community direction of programs. /P-8.
s Shared responsibilities. /G-1.
t. If other communities looking at "Y" support policy change, will also look at this. /G-14.
u Inappropriate policies. /G-16.
v. Policy change in New Careers programs to allow more community involvement and development. /B-5.

4. **Education and Training.**

a. Want New Careers dollars for community clean up and demolish abandoned houses and salvage materials. /C-7 & 10.
b. More training programs in Athabasca Basin. /U-11.
c. Training and education needed to get people off welfare. /Sto-14.
d. New Careers more flexible, reflect community needs, partnership in program delivery etc. /Sa-5 & 6, B-5. Cu-7, La-8, U-7, J-5 & 11.
e. Train local people to deliver government programs. /Bea-20.
f. Look at education programs to bridge from high school to post secondary. /Bea-22.
g. Need to have meaningful employment to be able to pay back student loans. /Bea-23.
h. Want training that will lead to jobs. /BL-6, B-14, C-1.
i. Need detailed and comprehensive training and employment strategies. /C-10.
j. Good training opportunities are needed in the north.
k. Better training and communications regarding programs delivered to community. /J-15.
l. Training opportunities for skilled people to maintain community facilities. /Cu-1.
m Train community people to deliver programs for elder care and safe homes. (Service providers) /Do-8.
n. New Careers - have problems with amounts required for employer contribution. (Communities really can't allow this) / La-8.
o. Increase Provincial Training Allowance, more needed so more people can take necessary training. /La-10.
p. Increase school opportunities. /Do-8.
q. Lack of high school in community. /T-2.
r. Location of training in community. /T-5.
s. Increasing population size. /T-7.
t. Training of community's members to be facilitators - leadership training etc. /T-12.
u. Local input into New Careers programs to meet needs of community. /G-4, W-6, Pin-22.
v. Meaningful training opportunities. /S-16, Bea-17, W-14.
w. Drug and alcohol distorts moral values. /W-18.
x. High drop out rate. /A-2, S-3.
y. Life skills classes. /A-11.
z. Retraining for upgrading. /L-15.
aa. Train young people for police work. /S-8.
bb Training programs should be open to all members of the community. /St-8.

cc PTA not available to Bill C-31. /St-9.
dd Promote education programs in areas of parenting and nutrition. /St-17.
ee Opportunities for meaningful training. /P-2.
ff Joint New Careers SERM programs not a benefit to community. /P-8.
gg Training programs not fully utilized need more community involvement in training and pgm development needed. /B-4.

5. Addictions.

a. Alcohol, gambling and substance abuse. /BL-1, D-1 & 2, I-1, T-6, W-1, A-1, P-1, T-1, S-1.
b. Family income going to gambling. /A-4.
c. Extended bar hours causes concern. /L-1.
d. Alcohol abuse causes family violence and neglect. /St-1, S-1.
e. Increased usage of drug and alcohol. /Pe-1.
f. Inadequate job training. /Pe-3.
g. Gambling is a problem. /La-3, Cr-2.
h. Increased drug abuse. /SL-1.
i. Drug and alcohol abuse is major concern. /La-1.

6. Community Based Services.

a. Advocacy system needed. /T-8.
b. Child care resources - foster and community homes. /T-9.
c. Training of community members to be facilitators. /T-12.
d. Establish community health social and development committees. /T-22.
e. Build programs on community values and strengths. /Pin-16, W-17 & 18.
f. Establish social justice committee. /W-18.
g. Community based services. /Cu-18, W-13.
h. School based nutritional programs. /L-4, Sto-16.
i. Community based healing initiatives. /G-21, P-15, L-16.
j. Elder care facilities at community level, home care/facilities, etc. /Pe-11 & 12, Sa-8, L-18.
k. Establish wholistic approach to processes to promote healing. /J-12, S-12.
l. Family healing workshops. /S-17.
m. Community forums to find solutions to community issues, i.e. alcohol, violence, pregnancy. /St-16.
n. Community based social workers and youth workers. /B-7, P-7 & 19, D-15, Cu-4, SL-7, Sto-4, Pin 4 &5, I-21.
o. Community based worker to promote healing. /Bea-10, G-17.
p. Lack of emergency services. /Cu-10.
q. Support aboriginal head start and day care. Cu-18.
r. Home care needs more responsibilities. /Pin-26.
s. Northern based healing lodge. /Pin-24, Sa-9.
t. Establish welfare board and review panel at local level. /Bea-14.

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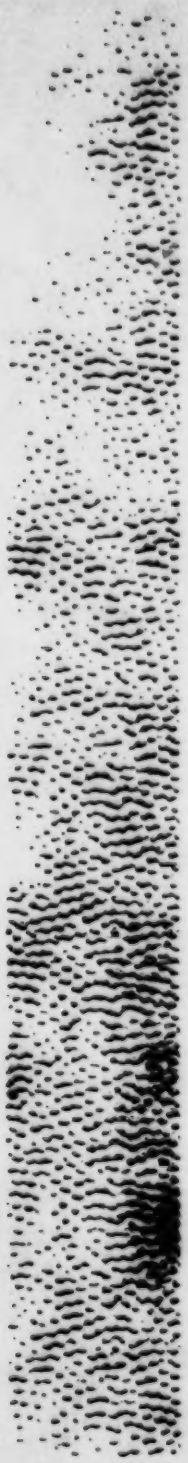

. Child Care.

a. More information on resources available and networking systems set up. /C-6, Cr-8.
b. Utilize own resources for own children. /C-7.
c. Foster and community homes. Culturally appropriate training for foster home parents. La-11, T-6, I-8.
d. Are foster parents doing their jobs? /D-7.
e. Poor response time, community wants input into apprehension. SL-11.
f. Keep kids in community. /La-15.
g. Need to recognize extended family. BL-13.
h. Family service mandate needs to be broadened to include counseling. /I-3.
i. Have own child specialist. /I-4.
j. Questions about liability? Northern focused? /I-8.
k. Community based resources. /T-9.
l. Enforce childcare responsibilities. /T-10.
m Establish protocol for community involvement in childcare protection and care to include community guidelines for apprehension and placements. /Cu-8, W-7, A-6.
n. Foster homes. /W-9.
o. Childcare services. /A-6, A-7.
p. Foster homes, therapeutic homes. /A-10.
q More foster homes, parenting programs. Issue; can not attract enough local foster/community therapeutic homes. B-8 & 10, L-8, Pe-8, SL-12.
r. Child care and protection non existent off reserve. /S-5.
s. Neglect from alcohol abuse. /St-1.
t. Foster homes and child care programs. /St-10, P-10.
u. Not always reported. /G-5.
v. Protocol on apprehension. /Pe-7, G-6 & 9, I-6, Pin 10, Sa-7, Bea-9.
w. Different standards between home and foster care. /G-8.
x. Foster homes for care, not money. /G-11.
y. Community involvement in identifying foster homes. /C-3 & 4, G-12,
z Changes in standards and policies for community homes. /I-9.
aa. Healing for former wards. /I-10.
bb. Establish assessment and stabilization services in the north. /I-11.
cc Local control of centre. /Pin-3 & 6.
dd Expand on existing resources. /Pin-14.
ee. Not enough foster and community homes and a need to review standards and policies. /Sa-10.
ff. Northern models for foster care etc. /Bea-12.

8. Youth Services.

a. Youth services to be more visible. /J-7, G-10.
b. Youth crime on increase. /Pe-2, B-1, D-3, Cr-1, SL-1, La-5, T-1, Sa-1, A-3.
c Teen pregnancy. More awareness needed information, family values, responsibilities and healing. Pe-2, B-2, La-5, St-5, T-21, A-11, S-3.
d. Youth workers /B-11.

e. Youth drop in centre. /Cr-15
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Mars. icho. Tinigi and Thank You

Allan Adam. New North Consultant

Marie Kyplain-Chartier. Government of Saskatchewan

Appendix "C"

Preliminary Report August 1998

Preliminary Report

"Seeking New Directions and Alternatives to Social and Justice Matters, getting Northerners involved in these Changes".

Quote:

"I'm doing this for my children's children, something for them to look forward

to, I want to deal those cards myself".

-Margaret Aubichon, June 26, 1998

August 31, 1998

Respectfully submitted by:
Allan Adam-Consultant New North
Marie Kyplain-Chartier-Social Services

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1.0 Introduction:

This northern Saskatchewan review is a part of the Northern Community and Social development Consultations, sponsored jointly by the New North-SANC Services Inc. and the Province of Saskatchewan. Through this process, both New North and the Government of Saskatchewan will establish a new relationship between northerners and the government.

The primary focus of phase one was a questionnaire to determine the key social development and justice issues in the north. Through these consultations, individuals and community leadership can identify solutions to improve northern life.

The purpose of the interview guide was to determine the structure of the community based meetings set to begin by the third week in September. The issues, priorities, recommendations and initiatives suggested by the community meetings will be summarized into a final report to be completed by December 31, 1998. New North will use this report to negotiate a formal *"Memorandum of Understanding"* with the province of Saskatchewan and to work with northern communities to implement the final report's recommendations.

Over one hundred individuals and community leaders participated in Phase One to help with the questionnaire. Information attained was kept confidential, names were not documented and interviewees results will be used in a general way to reflect the perspectives of the Social and Justice sectors, regarding improved service delivery to northerners.

42.0 Executive Summary:

To date we have visited 22 communities, the far north and four smaller communities on the westside were missed, due to the extreme fire situation in the north. Follow up meetings by phone were completed to ensure their participation in the process.

The communities have all expressed similar concerns whether they were large or small, the only exception were the communities who had stable tax bases and a better ability for job and economic development opportunities. They however do feel the impact of transient individuals and families dependent on the social system. The communities have all expressed totally that the main cause of the social upheaval in the north has to do with the social inequities across the north, as one individual from Pinehouse Lake put it, *"economic apartheid"*. The jobless rate is 80-98%, most of the jobs were low paying and seasonal.

From this inequity stems all the other social problems, youth crime, family violence,

poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, housing shortage, high highschool drop out rate, low levels of education, inadequate training opportunities, poor health, teen pregnancy, family breakdown, community safety, which includes policing and jurisdictional barriers between government policies and first nations.

3.0 Data Collection:

In order to reach the northern population, there needs to be an attempt to meet with each and every community when dealing with issues such as social services or justice. In the past, northerners have been involved in various inquiries, panels and countless government and educational institution surveys. In essence northerners have been studied from birth to death. There are reports dealing with all social aspects of northern life. Countless recommendations and ideas have surfaced and sunk through these various processes, all gathering dust on shelves. Ideas and recommendations are generally an excuse not to do anything with them, unless the commitment is there to proceed. Usually the up front costs associated with the idea is a lot cheaper than the long term accumulated costs of maintaining current processes. If the ideas come from the people, they have to be addressed according to their wishes, they have to be fully involved in every facet of that process.

In coming up with a format to this initiative, the Consultants reviewed past processes such as the Uranium Mine Review Panel concept and others that had the involvement of northerners as a whole. A questionnaire was drafted and reviewed by the social services department and New North representatives. Once a format was agreed upon, the questionnaire was taken to the communities for their input. (See Appendices "A" and "C" for questionnaire & communities visited) All information relevant to this process was documented and written down, some of those comments and quotations will appear in this report.

a) Phase One, Community Leaders consultations:

The first round of this review was designed to solicit information from the leaders of the community, who are the front line workers and know what the state of their communities are like. As well, there was participation by other members of the community who may be involved in other aspects of community well being. By consulting with the leaders first or "scoping" the north, we now have a good idea of what the key issues are and how they would like to see them addressed from their standpoint.

b) Phase Two, Community consultations:

Phase one is now completed, with the completion of this preliminary report. Phase two will focus it's attention by getting into the community for community based meetings. We will then hear from the people, both young and old. The meetings will be designed to get full

"Underdevelopment is not a static condition, but is instead a relationship. That relationship can exist between rich and poor countries. Rich and less rich poor and more poorer between unequal sectors of the economy and between unequal regions of the nation, the relationship regardless of where it exists show these characteristics;

The pattern of transition to peripheral capitalism is different from the pattern to the central capitalism, certain retrogressions take place, such as the ruin of the crafts without being replaced by industrial production, subsequent investment does not correct these setbacks;

Periphery development causes three distortions in the economy, extroversion in which the underdeveloped economy produces exotic goods for the central advanced market, causes lower wages in the periphery, sense of periphery cannot match productivity with the center of the same wages. Following on this, is another distortion, hypertrophy of the tertiary sector, or overgrowth of the service and support part of the economy, industry is not growing fast enough to employ those removed from the crafts and their children, so service and support jobs are made for those needing work. Jobs that consume the extra money of the rich and keep the idle engaged in sparse amounts of money. The last distortion is the tendency towards lightness, heavy industry does not locate in the region nor can the peripheral economy raise the capital to build it for themselves;

The profits and foreign capital leave the region rapidly, going to the central capitalist economy;

The periphery does not have the means to combat the monopolies;

Peripheral regions exhibit the same internal signs, extreme unevenness of product distribution and pricing, disarticulation and disconnectedness with the economy due to the purpose of supplying the central economy rather than needs of it's own people and domination by the central economy;

The ability for changeover to production for local use by the local people is blocked; There is a tendency towards state capitalism due to the special burdens placed on the peripheral area to try to industrialize under the limits noted above. Heavy intervention by the state and finally in many cases, actual state take over reflect the requirement of extraordinary measures to force this distorted industrialization to take place".[1]

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[1] "Spies, Peas, and Some Justice in Northern Saskatchewan" Jim Harding Center for Periphery Theory, by Frank Anne and others. Publisher: Wilfrid Laurier University Press ©1988

There are further documents that this interim report would like to refer to as well, the report "Changing Directions", was commissioned when the NDP government came to power in 1991. Following that, there was also another report that came out in January 1996, titled, "Redesigning Social Assistance, Preparing for a New Century". This report pointed to cuts in Unemployment Insurance, welfare and assistance to off reserve Indians in particular. On the other hand, it was said that the provincial economy was healthy and enjoyed one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country. But there were many people with low education and skill levels and child poverty had increased significantly over the past fifteen years.

There is a definite need for better work incentives within the welfare system to make working more rewarding than relying of social assistance.

In March 1997, the province released a progress report on welfare reform, entitled; "Children Families and Independence, Social Assistance Redesign". This report criticized the federal government for it's February 1997 budget which delayed the start of the Child benefit program until July 1998. The provincial government had committed six million dollars in new spending under a transition to the child benefit package for the 1997-98 fiscal year. That new program is now in effect and the implications are being felt across the north. The splitting of the program, people now get two cheques a month, social assistance for the parents comes from the province, child tax benefits now comes from the Federal Government, this new format is creating confusion amongst northerners. An incident that comes to mind on this issue is this; a client had income during the last tax year which exceeded allowable limits for benefits. That individual has now seen a decrease in their monthly child tax benefits. They are forced to endure more hardship because of flaws within the new funding arrangement.

Community Based Workshops on the "Child Benefits Program" needs to be initiated immediately. The focus being on the program and implications of the new changes etc. The department of Social Services through the various northern community agencies must coordinate that initiative.

b) **Social Issues**

Our first part of the questionnaire gave us an indication of the social climate of the communities and the north as a whole. By designing the questionnaire in this format, we can gauge the north in a general way as to what the main concerns are when they come to social matters. We were able to determine what the main concerns are, where the problems are and what they think might be the solutions to those obstacles.

With unemployment rampant in the north there are social problems that stem from this. We heard how policies and government regulations foreign to northerners have

resulted in a social dependency system and loss of control over one's life. In trying to help people, the government is enabling people to become reliant on the social system to sustain themselves. The people have expressed time and time again that they would like to see policy (ies) better reflect the needs and aspirations of those most affected by and social policy change or re-adjustment in the north. There is extreme hopelessness amongst many northerners with relation to what the future has in store for them, with billions of dollars worth of resources coming out of their region, they still remain one of the poorest people in all of Canada. (Refer to poor map, appendix "B").

Family Breakdown and Violence

The main component to this is the social fabric breakdown, is the realization that something is wrong in the average northern home. Parenting skills and moral values have deteriorated, people are not divulging all the information about their home conditions i.e. single moms not claiming to be living common law, because of this, marriage is on the decrease etc. All of this social upheaval is creating a rift in the family system, violence amongst family members is on the increase, alcohol and drug abuse is breaking down the concept of family (ies).

Community driven awareness programs to combat violence needs to be implemented. Training programs at the community level to incorporate individual participation must proceed too. This should include, mental health workers, anger management program administrators, early childhood development workers, guidance counselors, family mediators etc.

Communities do not have the resources (financially or facilities) to accommodate the people in crisis. Often families have to be relocated to a southern community in times of need. The abuser is often left at home with no ability to help them as well. There are no programs to help both the abused and abuser overcome the reasons why abuse takes place.

Northern communities need more assistance in educating and creating awareness towards counseling and combating this problem across the north.

Northern Safe homes and Shelters need to be established.

Individuals need to have the services provided in their languages and to have an ability to remain closer to home. Often the removal of the victim does not work, the victim feels that the abuse happens because of their doing, that's why they come back right away.

Non-governmental agencies working at the community level must be given the same respect as government agencies or Contractors doing the same work. I.E., Same

pay, benefits etc.

With the increased awareness to family violence, people are now willing to talk about it and not hide the matter anymore. By doing this, a stronger family foundation will be built once the healing process has begun. Community members want to curb this problem and have healthier places for their people to live. They're not afraid to speak out about it;

> *"Family values are gone, there is no discipline amongst children anymore, they just run at large and neglected all the time, it seems. Fathers need to be fathers, mothers need to be mothers. Violence has to stop".*
>
> -Sled Lake, July 20, 1998

Youth

The general state of young people are a towering concern in the north, many of them are resorting to drugs and alcohol and solvents to combat their inner struggles. If it becomes to unbearable they often turn to suicide. Elders have commented from time to time about this radical change in their lifetime;

> *"we live in two worlds, the young and old world, we don't hear each other anymore, respect is gone...our languages and cultures are being lost, we need to do something about it".*
>
> -Sandy Bay, July 14, 1998

Mayor Louis Morin had this to say about that loss of values ;

> *"Sometimes, moral values are put aside when people have to feed their families, our people do resort to bootlegging and pushing drugs...healing needs to take place, then we can take pride in ourselves, surroundings and community (ies)".*
>
> -Jans Bay, August 12, 1998

Although there is a big push to deal with the social problems and begin the process of talking about it, youth crime is a major concern to northerners, with a higher than average birth rate, more and more young people are coming into the world with no hope. Inactivity and a high drop out rate in school, allows young people to run at large and cause problems.

To combat the negative youth activities, interested individuals can work with the young people in the evenings. In this role model concept, older people can get in touch with the youth of their community. This can be initiated immediately.

Youth crime in the north needs to be addressed, the Federal Program on Crime Prevention needs to be tapped into. A Northern Crime Prevention Strategy must be

developed and implemented through this process. New North along with the communities with coordination from the department of Justice can work together.

Some communities have identified Young Offender activities as a major concern, there are minimal services to help the young people in trouble. One comment we heard was; *"The Young Offender Act is a joke!"*. Changes have to happen to reflect the needs of the north. Communities want to deal with these matters on their, reform their own young people. Community based Justice is an area they want to explore.

Community Based Justice initiatives must be initiated and undertaken by northern communities interested in changing the social climate of their region. This program can include all facets of community based initiatives such as; alternative justice, mediation, policing etc. This has to include training people interested in working in this field.

There is a need to have **northern based healing facilities** to accommodate families who want to heal as a unit. Removing the offender to a southern facility is not working. There is fear that the parenting duties are removed when this happens. Parents were the primary care givers. **The community as a whole needs more control.** If strategic planning is to be undertaken with the government, northerners (First Nations, Metis) need to be full participants in the process.

A healing lodge with a northern focus must be developed, in the interim, the alternative is northern approved community homes. The standards and polices to govern this must be done by northerners. Southern Policies don't fit.

Teen Pregnancy

Teen pregnancy is on the rise in most northern communities. *"Babies having babies"*. Was a comment we heard from one community to another. Some young girls are having babies to obtain social housing through existing policy which states that, one must have a family in order to obtain services. All of this creates dysfunction in the family and individual's lives.

Teen Pregnancy must be addressed. If the communities do not get assistance to address and implement programs for this target group. We are going to see another generation of dysfunctional families, who are going to lack the skills and be in a role they do not understand. Educational programs for both young men and women must be continued. Sex education programs to curb this situation must continue.

Drugs, Alcohol and Substance Abuse

Drugs, alcohol and solvent abuse now affects everyone's life across the north. People are feeling the effects of "firewater". Drugs, alcohol and solvents offer the brief solitude from the internal pain. Drugs and alcohol are available to anyone who wants them. In La Loche, a bottle of whiskey costs the same as it does in any southern liquor store.

> *"Why can't the government subsidize milk? Whiskey costs the same in the north as it does in the south! Our people need healthy food, not something to make them more un-healthy".*
>
> Mayor JJ Janvier-La Loche, August 11, 1998

Unemployment, hopelessness, boredom and the lack of activities along with no opportunities leads to high levels of substance abuse.

Again, the north has to provide the awareness, education and training to this population. Without adequate funding resources, the north will always lag behind. Healing has to happen to the individual, family and then the community. The need to build healing lodges has been identified as a primary source of beginning rehabilitation in the community. It can only succeed if these lodges are located in the north, closer to the culture and languages of the individuals in need.

Healing lodges have to be built in the north, they must be run by northerners.

Housing

Housing is also another big issue and will continue to be a big one in the north with the exception of those towns that have their own housing market, rental etc. The housing policy has to reflect the wants of northern people and their needs. The government has created standards amongst people. The rapid growth of the northern population is demanding more housing and people have to be encouraged to build their own homes, after all there is an abundance of woodsupply to be able to do that. Government policy and regulations do not allow people to harvest trees to do this, major forestry monopolies dictate whether or not individuals can harvest trees for building purposes.

> *"What we need is, long term plans, not short term...it's like feeding a dog, fish...the dog quickly gulps it down and it's gone! We don't want any more hand outs, we can train our people to build their own homes".*
>
> Cyril Roy-Cumberland House, Aug 25, 1998

Drop the 25% of total income to rent homes in the north. This is creating problems for people who want to work and provide a home for their families. Sometimes people quit a good job because they don't want to lose their homes. This is creating dishonesty amongst people, you have to lie in order to live in one of these units. The government needs to re-evaluate this policy to better reflect the needs of the northern people who choose to work and live in the north. A northern based housing program need to be established which includes policies and regulations devised by the north. By doing this, community groups can own homes to rent to others.

Elders

The other element that is crucial, is the need to care for the elders. They have life long skills to pass on information from generation to generation. They can only do that, if they remain in the northern communities and not be moved to southern institutions where they often die of loneliness. Family members have expressed concern over traveling south to visit them, this costs money and it's hard for people to do that. Elder care facilities have to be established in the north.

c) **Justice**

In the justice area or delivery of justice, policing was a big concern in a majority of the communities. Response times were often poor and people did not feel the police was listening to their concerns, *"If a white business person called them, they would be here in no time at all"*, was one comment we heard. New RCMP recruits have to be culturally sensitized before being stationed in the north. There is interest in the police management board concept used now by first nations communities.

In other justice areas, the communities would like to see more community based justice initiatives, i.e. mediation, sentencing circles, alternatives measures etc.

5.0 Recommendations:

1. Community Based healing initiatives

We need to look at a holistic healing model which focus's on the Indian medicine wheel model (spiritual, physical, mental and emotion) that is going to address all the social issues. The north has minimal services. The consultations have identified skilled human resources to deal with these issues. How do we tap into these resources?

Recommendation: There is a definite need for the Government to establish into Community Based Organizations (formerly N.G.O.'s) to

offset the pressures facing the communities as they head into the healing mode. Government must identify with the community, what their needs are, how to begin this process and to help devise a community and northern based strategy to initiate the idea.
This strategy must include training for mental health and other therapy workers.

2. Unemployment

The unemployment situation is a bleak one for many northern residents. Social Assistance dependency is extreme in all northern communities, with the exception of a few resource based communities across the north. The north is rich in natural resources, extraction sends money south only. The bleak socio-economic climate does not reflect this.

Policies and government regulations foreign to northerners have resulted in this inequity and loss of control over their own lives.

Recommendation: The province is in negotiations with northern leaders through the Northern Dialogue Steering Committee process. This developmental work is pretty well started, we recommend that the process be followed to achieve the goal of getting northerners employed.

The Strategy is as follows;

Objective:

- To achieve equity in Northern Saskatchewan, in terms of employment and income relative to southern Saskatchewan.

Principles:

- A sustainable and diversified economy that is less reliant upon natural resource industries.
- Northern control and northern decision making is a fundamental principle.
- The Northern Investment Strategy is not viewed as an enhancement or coordination of existing programs; it is assured that existing government programs will remain intact.
- There must be accountability of the Northern Investment Strategy to northern communities and people. Because government moneys are invested in the fund, there must be accountability to those government authorities for expenditures made.

Priorities:

- Capacity building is essential to ensure that communities and groups in the north have the human and organizational ability to identify, develop, implement, monitor and support new economic ventures.

- Economic development is the focus of the northern investment strategy.
- Infrastructure in education, training along with community and social development should be supported through other program initiatives. However, in cases where these are essential to attract an investment or make a project viable, some expenditures may be devoted to these areas, where it is shown that the expected return from the project are expected to generate sufficient return to warrant expenditures.

It is safe to assume that if nothing is done in this area, social assistance dependency will continue to rise and the north will never get out of the state it is now in.

3. **Jurisdictional Barriers**

Indian and Metis Organizations along with the Federal and Provincial government departments deliver existing programs to northerners. This joint process is creating a rift in some communities and creating class disparity amongst northerners, there are; have and have not classes. Situations identified are as follows, a Reserve community may be getting child and family services meanwhile across the road, a non-reserve community will not get the same services. Even though the people may be related.

Northerners want to work together as one.

Recommendation: The government has created classes of people and some of those standards reflect these disparities. For example; education, medical, funding dollars and other opportunities. Non treaty northerners are at the bottom of this class sector. They can't even run their own programs such as housing, social assistance and other community infrastructure programs like their Reserve counterparts. The Federal and Provincial governments must work in accordance to northerner's requests to create the same opportunities. By establishing Protocol arrangements between the Province and Federal Governments, duplication can be avoided and everyone can be treated equitably. Negotiations on Protocols must proceed now, this jurisdictional impasse must be overcome.

4. Justice Strategy

There is a definite need to have Northern Communities work in collaboration with the RCMP along with the Federal and Provincial government departments to determine the policing needs of the community. This process will identify appropriate community based Justice initiatives.

Recommendation: The need to develop and incorporate a northern Justice strategy to include;

- **Cross-Cultural sensitivity training for all Justice Personnel.**
- **The need for a Senior Level Aboriginal Liaison position be established and stationed in the north.**
- **Support existing Justice projects, i.e. La Loche Community Development Corporation model etc. Expand on that idea to other communities who are ready to take on that idea.**
- **Municipalities needs adequate financial resources to house and hire more RCMP members as the need arises.**
- **Legal Aide must provide adequate services to individuals in need, the visits fifteen minutes before Court does not work.**
- **Legal Aide dollars could be used for Lawyers other than Legal Aide Lawyers.**
- **A northern "Crime Prevention" strategy with money from the national crime prevention program must be initiated immediately.**

Existing government policies/regulations for the above mention recommendations will have to be thoroughly examined and changed to reflect the changing northern climate to self-determination.

6.0 Acknowledgments

Members of the New North Social Development Committee and the Consultants working on this project would like to thank all of the participants in this project. Especially to the Elders and Youth who guided us during our visits with them.

7.0 Conclusion

The north is ready for change, people want the opportunity to do that, the next millennium is where that can happen. As Louis Morin from Jans Bay put it;

> "The government has to just allow that change to happen, northerners are ready for the future".
>
> -Jans Bay, August 12, 1998

"Northerners have been too dependant on a southern system for too long, they're ready to proceed ahead. Northerners want the opportunity to feed and take care of their own families in their own homes".

-Ile a la Crosse-Max Morin July, 1998

Marsi tcho and tinigi, Thank you.

The Pilot Flight

"The sun went down on Tuesday.
It was a full day.
It dawned with all the fresh
Innocence
Of every new day.
It unfolded its morning
with promise,
With plan,
With vision,
With dreams.
A full noon crowned its zenith.
Then almost imperceptibly,
The shadows began to lengthen ...
Not unpleasant, but welcome
Was the shade of the afternoon.
The plan had been revealed,
The vision cleared,
The dream became retrospect.
The sky began to spread the news
that
the day was done.
The sun went down on Tuesday ...
Wednesday dawned with its own promise.
O God of all the days complete,
Help me to understand
The beginnings and the ends

So that I may let go the past
And, in so doing,
Go renewed and free
Into the new day
You plan for me."
-Dorothy Pierson

9.0 *Appendices*

A. Terms of Reference:

– Northern Community and Social Development Consultations –

1. The Consultations will deal with Community issues on a holistic basis so that a multi-sectoral approach, which involves all relevant government departments, can be developed.

2. The Consultations will deal with prevention and the development of community capacity and socio-economic issues.

3. The Consultations will encourage community-based and community-driven responses to issues identified as a means of enhancing community decision-making and self-reliance.

4. The Consultations will identify changes which will make the policies and programs of provincial government departments and agencies more relevant to life in Northern Saskatchewan.

5. The issues, priorities, recommendations and initiatives identified by the Consultations will be summarized in a final report. This report will be used to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the New North Agency and the Province regarding government policies and programs relating to community and socio-economic development. It is understood that any such Memorandum of Understanding would be compatible with other Memorandum of Understandings between the Province and First Nations or the Metis Nation.

6. Government policies and programs which are relevant to Northern Saskatchewan, will be reviewed by the New North/Province Joint Social Development Committee in advance of the Consultations, so that both Committee members and the Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities Services Inc. employee will communicate accurate information to community members.

7. Consultation process:

   - To commence May 1, 1998 and terminate December 31, 1998;
   - Interim report to be submitted to the New North/Province Joint Social Development Committee no later than August 31, 1998;

- Final Report to be submitted no later than December 31, 1998;
- Final Report to be used to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the Agency and the Province to work together collaboratively to review government policies and programs relating to community and socio-economic development in northern communities;
- Findings of the consultation process which relate to Federal Government programs and policies will be communicated to the Federal Government through the Northern Dialogue Steering Committee.

"B"

Community and Social Development Consultations
Interview Guide and Questionnaire

Organization, Town, Village or Hamlet of: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Interview Conducted by: _____

Conducted in English _____ **Michif:** _____ **Dene:** _____

This interview, which is part of the Northern Community and Social Development Consultations, sponsored jointly by New North and the Province of Saskatchewan, marks the beginning of the establishment of a new relationship between northerners and the provincial government.

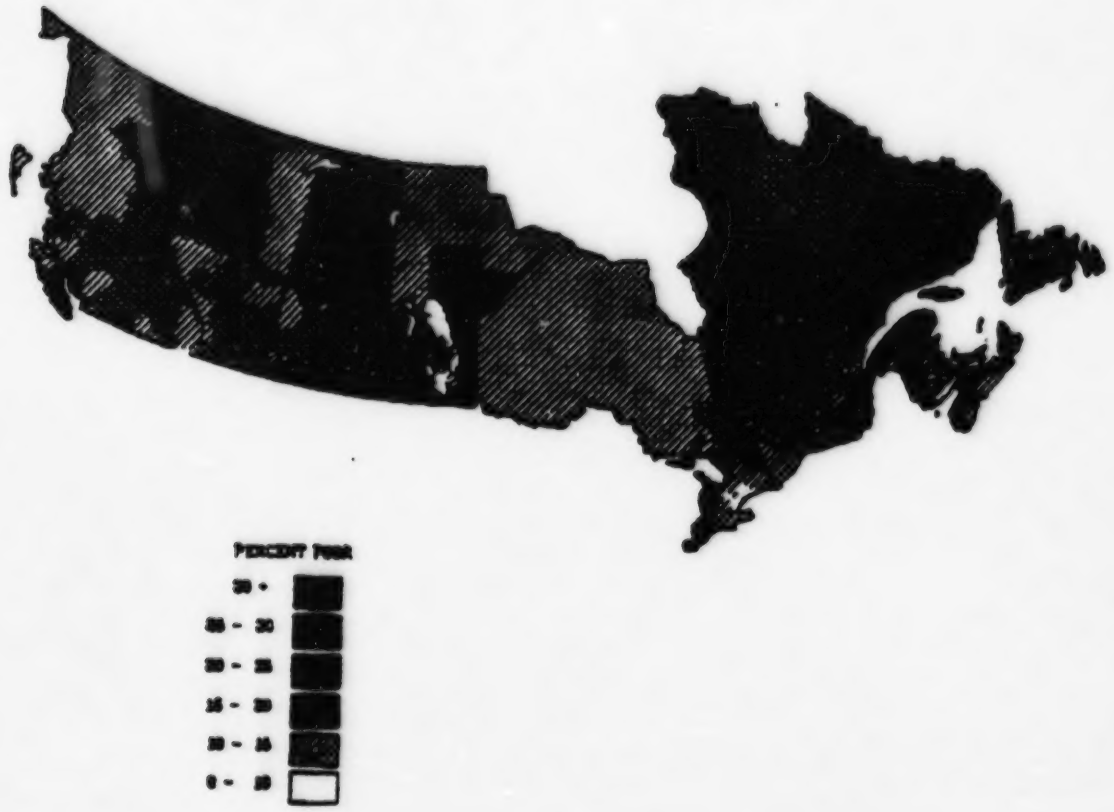
The focus of these consultations will be on developing the identification of key social development and justice issues, and on community based solutions. The province and northern leaders want to find out your concerns and your ideas for improving the quality of life at the community level.

The purpose of this interview guide and questionnaire is to obtain background information, which will be used to plan community meetings, which will take place from mid August to mid November. The issues, priorities, recommendations and initiatives suggested by the community meetings will be summarized in a final report of the Consultations which will be presented to both New North and the province by December 31, 1998. New North will use this report to negotiate a formal Memorandum of Understanding and to work with northern communities and the province to implement the report's recommendations.

We are asking people to help with this process to ensure you full participation in this process. All information you provide to us will be kept *confidential*. Your name will not be used to identify or associate you with the information you provided. The results will be used in a general way to reflect the perspectives of the Social and Justice sectors, regarding service delivery.

"C"

FIGURE 4.4: PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION POOR, CANADA, 1986.



Source: Ross, David P. and Shillington, Richard. The Canadian Fact Book on Poverty 1989. Ottawa: The Canadian Council on Social Development 1989. Used with Permission. Based on analysis of Statistics Canada's Survey of Consumer Finances for the 1986 income year. Indian reserves were not included in the statistics.

New North Social
Development Committee

Proposal and Plan for serious consideration

General Idea (vision) Community Empowerment

Goal

Objectives

{ Specific Budget Items for 1999/2000 fiscal year }

Long Term Goals

Vision:

To Empower northern aboriginal communities to develop and own wholistic strategies which promote wellness and independence. The goal of these strategies is to achieve a balance between the four elements of the *Medicine Wheel Concept; the mental, spiritual, physical and emotional well being of a person.*

Goal:

Establish a community-based process to identify solutions to identified social issues and concerns which incorporates a community learning opportunity.

Objectives:

1. Provide New North with adequate financial resources to initiate and support community based planning and development strategies through the following processes;

    a) Establish community priorities and community mechanisms to implement the priorities through the hiring of three northern community development coordinators to work with local communities.
    b) Train community people to provide wellness programs in each community. The idea is to have wellness teams to work in each of the communities.

c) Support community initiatives to develop northern safe homes, shelters, community homes, youth programs etc.

2. Support a movement towards establishing harmonious relationships between jurisdictions in the north as indicated in the Preliminary report that addresses the jurisdictional barriers.

3. Tentative Budget/expenditures required to complete outlined task.
   Projected $200,000 for 1999/2000 fiscal year.

   The resources identified above to be allocated to New North for community development staff contract trainers to facilitate and support community based planning/training initiatives.

3 Trainers @ $40,000 plus benefits	= $120,000
Travel 3 @ $15,000	= $45,000
Phone/fax office costs 3 @ $5,000	= $15,000
Training of Community people	= $15,000
Administration fee	= $5,000
Total	= $200,000

New North - SANC ***Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities***

Administrative Centre
Box 705
Prince Albert, Saskatchewan S6V 5S2
Phone: (306) 922-5100 Fax: (306) 922-5120

October 13, 1998

To: Honourable Minister of Social Services
Harry VanMulligen
Office of the Provincial Legislature
Regina, Saskatchewan

Re: Recommendations from Preliminary report-Northern review

Mr. Minister,

Please accept this proposal on behalf of the New North Organization for your perusal. In it, you will find, is, the primary recommendation from the two authors undertaking this project, Allan Adam and Marie Kyplain-Chartier.

As indicated in the report, their findings are from the initial set of meetings held across the north with northern leaders.

As Co-Chair of New North, we request immediate response to this proposal and look forward to that in the next while.

Sincerely and tinigi,

Max Morin, Co-Chair
New North

Cc/A.D.M. Glenda Yeates, Social Services
Regina

New North - SANC *Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities*

Administrative Centre
Box 766
Prince Albert, Saskatchewan S6V 5S2
Phone: (306) 922-5100 Fax: (306) 922-5120

November 2, 1998

Minister of Social Services, Harry VanMulligen
Government of Saskatchewan
Regina, Saskatchewan

Dear Minister VanMulligen,

It's now been almost a month since I wrote to you with a proposal outlined "healing from the inside out". A proposal, which resulted from the preliminary round of community consultations on social development issues in northern Saskatchewan. Further community meetings are now taking place in the north.

I would like to invite you to one of those community meetings in Pinehouse Lake on November 12th, 1998 from 1-4pm. We need to discuss the preliminary findings and the proposal New North submitted last month.

Both Cecile Calsse, chair of the New North Social Development Committee and myself will be a part of the meeting that we would like to hold at the village office boardroom from 12-1pm.

Please confer with our office at your earliest convenience whether this can fit into your schedule.

Thank you.

Max Morin, New North Co-chair
sbe
cc: AGM-Glenda Yeates
-File

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Max Morin, Co-Chair
New North

Cc/A.D.M. Glenda Yeates, Social Services
Regina

Appendix "D"

Self-Healing Proposal

CDC Workers

1. From the following list of social development issues, please select the issues that most concern you. Number them in order of importance.

Family Violence _____	High School Drop Out Rate _____
Youth Crime _____	Family Breakdown _____
Teen Pregnancy ____	Jurisdictional Barriers (between communities) ____
Drug & Alcohol Abuse ____	Inadequate Training Opportunities _____
Poverty _____	Poor Health _____
Unemployment _____	Adult Crime & Victimization _____
Low Levels of Education _____	Community Safety _____
Gambling_____	Housing_____

2. Why do you believe your community is in the state that it is in? Please elaborate. What do you think the root causes of these issues are?

3. What social services programs is there in your community to deal with the issues that concern you? What do you know about them? For example, Income Support/Social Assistance Program (SAP).

4. What do you know about these programs?
   a) Saskatchewan/Canada Child Benefit program:
   ____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
   Please explain your reason for this answer:

   b) New Careers:
   ____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
   Please explain your reason for this answer:

   c) Saskatchewan Employment Supplement Program (SES):
   ____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
   Please explain your reason for this answer:

   d) Pos: Secondary Training Allowance (PTA) program:
   ____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
   Please explain your reason for this answer:

5. How appropriate are the following programs for your community? What gaps exist?

a) Child Protection and Child Care:

_____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____ Inappropriate

Please explain your reason for the above answer:

b) Community resources What is in your community to support these services?

i) Foster Homes:

____Appropriate ____Not Sure ____Inappropriate

Please explain your reason for the above answer:

ii) Therapeutic Homes:

____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate

Please explain your reason for this answer:

iii) Elder Care Facilities:

____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate

Please explain your reason for this answer:

iv) Safe Homes and Shelters:

____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate

Please explain your reason for this answer:

What changes would you like to see to make these programs more relevant to your community?

c) Community Living Services (programs for the mentally & physically challenged)

____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate

What is in your community to support these services?

Please explain your reason for this answer:

What changes would you like to see to make this program more relevant for your community?

6. Justice Services - How appropriate are these services to your community?

a) Justice Workers:
____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
Please explain your reason for this answer:

b) Alternative Measures:
____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
Please explain your reason for this answer:

c) Fine Option:
____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
Please explain your reason for this answer:

d) Young Offenders:
____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
Please explain your reason for this answer:

e) Mediation Services:
____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
Please explain your reason for this answer:

f) Family Group Conferencing:
____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
Please explain your reason for this answer:

g) Legal Aide:
____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
Please explain your reason for this answer:

h) Law Enforcement:
____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
Please explain your reason for this answer:

i) Court Services, includes workers and translation:
____Appropriate _____Not Sure ____Inappropriate
Please explain your reason for this answer:

What changes would you like to see make these programs more relevant in your community?

7. What programs or services are currently provided by community groups or organizations, which address social development or justice needs?

8. What community resources and skills do you have to deal with the key issues in your community?

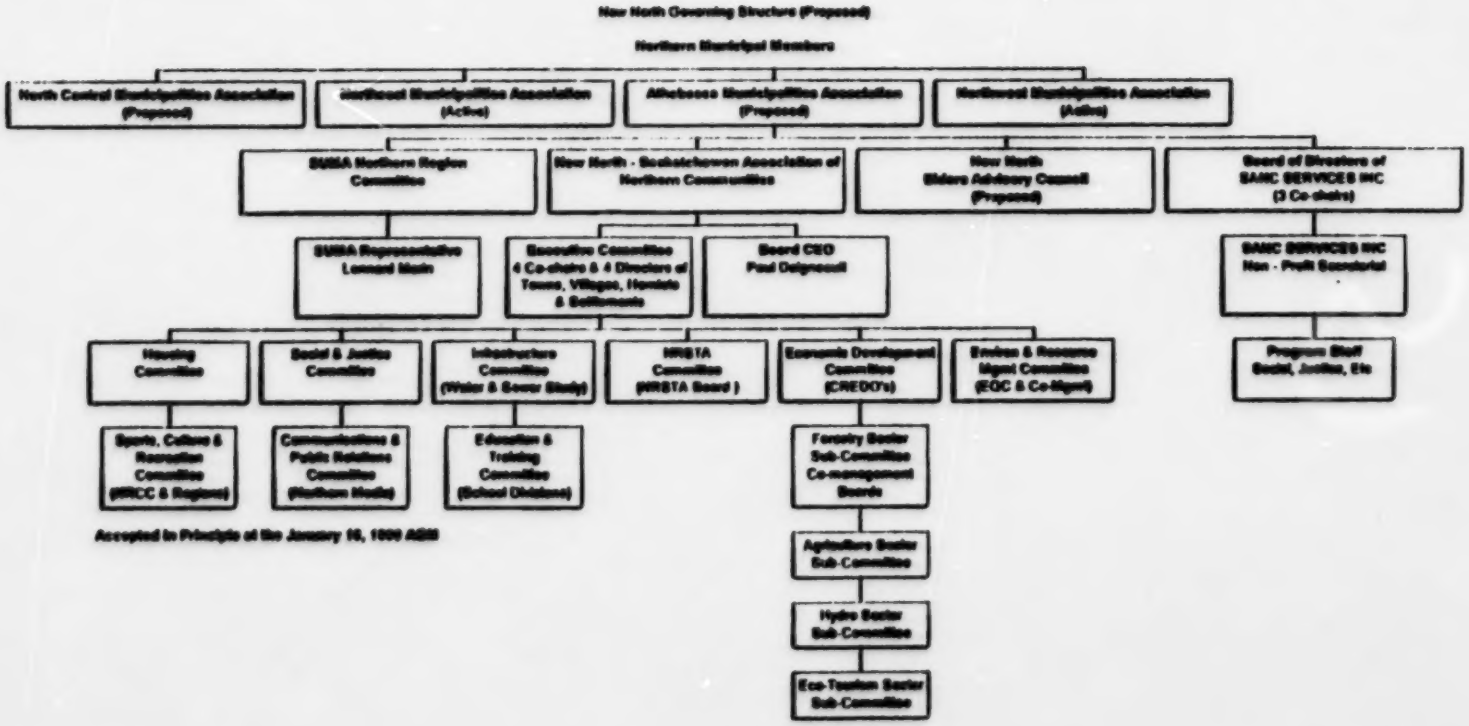
9 What has your community done in the past, which has been effective in dealing with these issues? Why was it effective? How could it be expanded? Would your community be willing to undertake any of these programs, if the opportunity arises?

10. Why is your community a good place to live in? What can you do to make your community a better place to live in? How can Social Services and the Justice departments help you achieve your goals and aspirations?

Appendix "E"

New North Organization Chart

New North
Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities


New North Governing Structure (Proposed)
Northern Municipal Members
North Central Municipalities Association (Proposed)
Northeast Municipalities Association (Active)
Athabasca Municipalities Association (Proposed)
Northwest Municipalities Association (Active)
SUMA Northern Region Committee
New North - Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities
New North Elders Advisory Council (Proposed)
Board of Directors of SANC SERVICES INC (3 Co-chairs)
SUMA Representative Leonard Main
Executive Committee 4 Co-chairs & 4 Directors of Towns, Villages, Hamlets & Settlements
Board CEO Paul Delgrescuit
SANC SERVICES INC Non - Profit Secretariat
Housing Committee
Social & Justice Committee
Infrastructure Committee (Water & Sewer Study)
HRSTA Committee (HRSTA Board)
Economic Development Committee (CREDO's)
Environ & Resource Mgmt Committee (EOC & Co-Mgmt)
Program Staff Social, Justice, Etc
Sports, Culture & Recreation Committee (PRCC & Regions)
Communications & Public Relations Committee (Northern Media)
Education & Training Committee (School Divisions)
Forestry Sector Sub-Committee Co-management Boards
Agriculture Sector Sub-Committee
Hydro Sector Sub-Committee
Eco-Tourism Sector Sub-Committee
Accepted in Principle at the January 16, 1999 AGM

Appendix "F"

"Welfare Reform"

BACKGROUND FACTS

Canadians have built a social safety net over the past fifty years that has become an essential part of our national identity. However, today's world is changing faster than present social programs can respond. A changing labour market, high unemployment among Canada's youth, and the fact that over 1.2 million children live in households receiving social assistance are just some of the issues that need to be addressed.

Canada's social programs have served us well, but they were designed to meet the social and economic needs of a different era. It's time to re-think our priorities and come up with a plan that is responsive, compassionate and economical.

There appears to be a growing consensus that the time has come to rethink the current social and economic priorities of Canadians. That is why the federal government is calling on all of us to join in rebuilding our social security system - one that shows compassion yet offers incentives to work and restores hope for the future.

THE REFORM PROCESS

On January 31, 1994, Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Human Resources Development, announced a process to reform Canada's social security system. The comprehensive process will involve individual Canadians, parliamentarians, provinces and territories, communities and organizations.

Development of action plan

- The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resources Development has held public hearings on social security and job market concerns and has submitted an interim report

- Federal/provincial/territorial officials are discussing issues of joint concern

- Task Force has been advising the Minister on the development of the action plan

Nota -

- The release of an action plan will give Canadians the information they need to reflect on the issues and discuss proposed solutions and options

Consultation regarding action plan

- The Parliamentary Standing Committee will hold open hearings to allow individual Canadians as well as affected groups to discuss choices outlined in the action plan

The Standing Committee will submit a report to the House of Commons

Individuals and groups will be given a wide range of opportunities to participate, such as:

- Members of Parliament receive input from constituents

- Interactive and educational television programs

- Workbook presenting the issues and options for reform is completed by individual Canadians

• 1-800 line

• Organized events and conferences

Nota -

• Input from all groups and individuals will be compiled and analyzed. Results will be discussed with provinces and territories so that legislation can be introduced to build the social security system that Canadians want

THE ACTION PLAN: A STARTING POINT

The action plan is:

• a discussion paper which will propose a number of options for reform for Canadians to consider;

• a reference point for many kinds of consultation that will occur; and

• a catalyst for a national discussion about building a new social security system which:

- aims to get Canadians back to work;

- provides income support for those who need it;

- fosters independence and mutual responsibility;

and

- is affordable and responsible.

BROAD-BASED PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

Broad public consultations will begin after the action plan has been released. As highlighted on page 1, there will be many opportunities for input:

• The Standing Committee on Human Resources Development will hold hearings. Groups and individuals representing many interests may appear before it.

• Individual Canadians will have an opportunity over the coming months to express their views through a variety of means, such as:

• discussions with their MP

• interactive and educational television programs

• attending organized events and conferences

• responding to questions posed in a workbook available through a 1-800 line

LEARN MORE

Did you know that the highest level of unemployment exists among Canada's youth, with 18% of our young people out of work? Or that more than 1.2 million children still live in poverty and that close to 3 million Canadians receive social assistance? And that despite technology's demand for a better-skilled workforce, the average Canadian employee receives only two days of structured training per year?

If we are going to re-think our social security priorities, we need to know the facts. Human Resources Development Canada has developed a booklet to provide Canadians with background information on the issues and trends affecting social security reform. It covers employment, training/learning, income support and the social services needs of children and families, youth and working-age adults.

Over the next few weeks, a series of fact sheets will also be available. To get on our mailing list, please write or fax the Enquiries Centre.

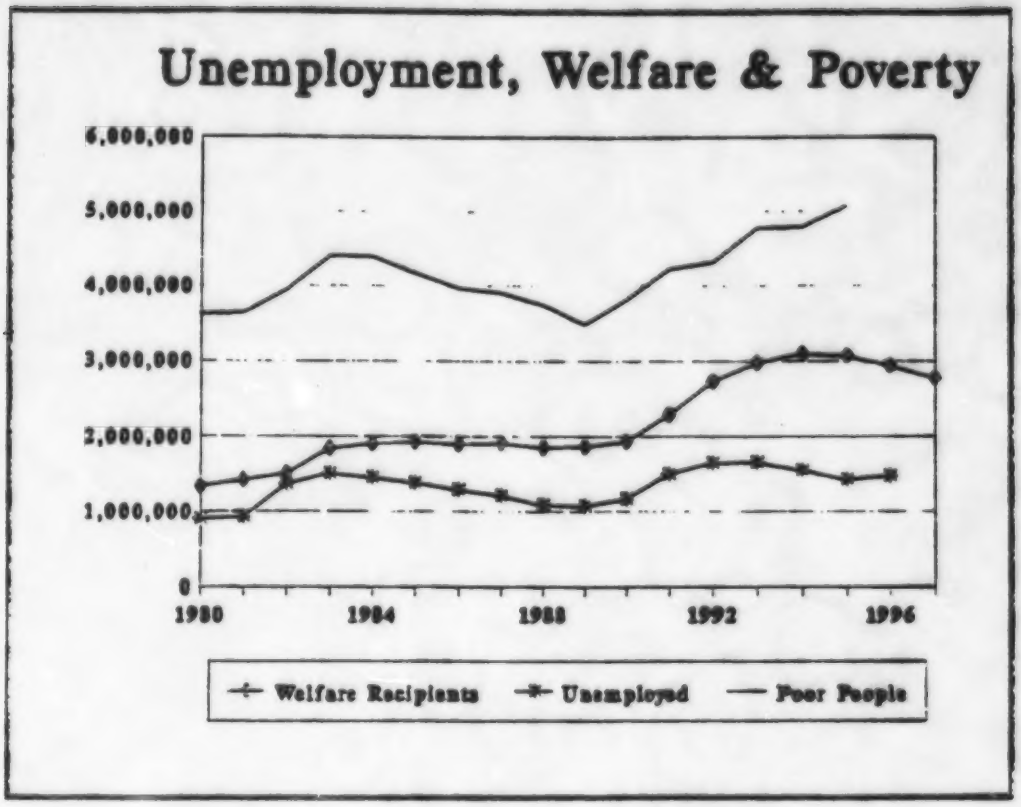
For your copy of "Social Security in Canada - Background Facts" or additional copies of this fact sheet, please write*:

Human Resources Development Canada Enquiries Centre 140 Promenade du Portage Phase IV, Level 0 Hull, Quebec K1A 0J9 Fax: (819) 953-7260
*These documents are available in alternative formats.

Produced by: Strategic Communications, Human Resources Development Canada, May 1994
Catalogue no. SC-003-05-94

Appendix "G"

"Welfare in Canada"



The same general pattern appears in the line marked with diamonds representing the estimated number of people on welfare as of March 31 each year. The number of people on welfare is invariably higher than the number of people who are unemployed. There are two main reasons for this. The unemployment statistics cover individuals who are out of work, but they do not take account of spouses or children of unemployed Canadians. The welfare statistics count all members of all families on welfare as well as the "unattached" individuals who are on welfare. The welfare statistics also include a sizable number of people - especially people with severe disabilities - who would not normally be part of the paid labour force in the first place.

In 1990, the average number of people who were unemployed was 1,163,900. Unemployment reached a peak of 1,648,800 in 1993 and was down to 1,469,200 in 1996. The number of people on welfare rose from 1,930,100 in 1990 to 3,100,200 in 1994 and was down to 2,937,100 by 1996. The number on welfare as of March 31, 1997, was 2,774,900.

The graph also shows the number of poor people in Canada each year from 1980 through 1995 as reported in the National Council of Welfare's annual publication Poverty Profile. Like the statistics on unemployment and welfare, the statistics on poverty rise and fall with the state of the economy. The 1996 poverty statistics will not be available until the end of 1997.

This report on welfare reform in the 1990s includes detailed information about welfare programs in each province and territory, including trends in welfare caseloads and the adequacy of the benefits provided.

Welfare is often described as Canada's social safety net of last resort, because it was designed to assist people who have exhausted all other means of support. Welfare is supposedly designed to cover the cost of the necessities of life. As we will see repeatedly in this report, however, the size of a person's welfare cheque often has less to do with the cost of living and more to do with the willingness of governments to foot the bill.

Welfare in Canada is funded primarily by the federal, provincial and territorial governments. Cuts in federal support have had a devastating effect on the adequacy of welfare programs throughout Canada. Most provinces and territories were quick to pass on the federal cuts or impose additional cuts of their own.

The federal government started walking away from welfare and social services in 1990 with a cap on cost-sharing under the Canada Assistance Plan in the three wealthiest provinces: Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. The Progressive Conservative government in Ottawa decided that payments under the plan to the three provinces would not increase by more than five percent a year. The "cap on CAP" was originally set to last for two years, but it was later extended until the end of the 1994-95 fiscal year.

Welfare caseloads continued to grow in Ontario and British Columbia in the wake of the recession of 1990 and 1991, and the provinces had to pay all the costs of welfare and social services above the five percent ceiling. In the end, the cap on CAP cost British Columbia $1.3 billion and Ontario a whopping $8.4 billion. Losses in Alberta were minimal because of the province's decision to reduce the size of its welfare rolls under reforms that began in 1993.

The National Council of Welfare strongly criticized the cap on CAP in a 1990 report entitled The Canada Assistance Plan: No Time for Cuts. We argued that the federal government should not be cutting its support for welfare at a time of increasing need and that poor people should not be asked to share the burden of cuts in government spending.

Not long after the 1993 federal election, the new Liberal government annnounced an overall freeze on welfare payments to the provinces and territories and imposed a new round of cuts in unemployment insurance.

Federal social policy hit rock bottom in the 1995 budget speech with huge cuts in spending and a new "block funding" mechanism known as the Canada Health and Social Transfer to replace the Canada Assistance Plan and funding arrangements for medicare and post-secondary education that were known as Established Programs Financing.

The new funding arrangements started with the 1996-97 fiscal year on April 1, 1996, and ushered in sizable cuts in combined federal support for medicare, post-secondary education, welfare and social services. In the 1994-95 fiscal year, the federal government paid $29.4 billion to the provinces and territories for the four programs, partly in cash and partly in taxing powers that Ottawa had originally given up in 1977. By 1997-98, total federal support would fall by 14 percent to $25.2 billion.

Welfare was particularly hard hit by the change in federal policy. The Canada Assistance Plan required provinces and territories to provide welfare to all people determined to be "in need." It required provinces and territories to have a procedure for appeals for people who felt mistreated by the welfare system. And it prevented provinces and territories from imposing residence requirements on people applying for welfare.

Under the Canada Health and Social Transfer, only the ban on residence requirements remained. The elimination of the needs test as a national standard cleared the way for provinces and territories to impose work-for-welfare programs and to disqualify certain groups from applying for welfare. Appeals continued to be allowed even without a national requirement, but most appeals systems became meaner because of new limits on the types of decisions that could be appealed or because the process itself became more rigid and legalistic.

TABLE 1

FEDERAL TRANSFERS FOR MEDICARE, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION WELFARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS

	Previous Fiscal Arrangements		Canada Health and Social Transfer		
	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Newfoundland	$608	$608	$559	$506	$511
Prince Edward Island	137	137	123	115	118
Nova Scotia	964	966	869	805	822
New Brunswick	763	764	692	637	651
Quebec	8,098	8,141	7,358	6,814	6,923
Ontario	10,530	10,653	9,682	9,129	9,468
Manitoba	1,141	1,143	1,033	955	976
Saskatchewan	982	981	898	830	848
Alberta	2,525	2,552	2,273	2,182	2,269
British Columbia	3,573	3,632	3,311	3,175	3,312
Yukon	34	35	30	29	30
Northwest Territories	74	75	72	68	69
CANADA	$29,429	$29,686	$26,900	$25,243	$25,996

The National Council of Welfare called the Canada Health and Social Transfer "the worst social policy initiative undertaken by the federal government in more than a generation" in a report entitled The 1995 Budget and Block Funding. Other social policy groups raised similar complaints. The federal government refused to listen.

The first concession to the criticism came in the 1996 federal budget speech with the announcement that cash payments to the provinces and territories under the Canada Health and

Social Transfer would not fall below $11 billion a year. A second concession came at the start of the 1997 federal election campaign, when the Liberals said the cash floor for the CHST would be raised to $12.5 billion. The announcement was billed as a reinvestment in health care. Welfare was barely mentioned during the campaign that followed.

Table 1 on the previous page shows federal transfers for medicare, post-secondary education, welfare and social services by province and territory from the 1994-95 fiscal year through fiscal 1998-99. The figures are cash payments and taxing powers combined and are based on a minimum total cash payment of $12.5 billion.[1]

The first two columns reflect the previous restraints on federal payments under the Canada Assistance Plan and on federal support for medicare and post-secondary education. The next three columns show the additional cuts under the new Canada Health and Social Transfer. The overall drop in federal support from the 1994-95 fiscal year to 1997-98 was 14.2 percent, from $29.4 billion to $25.2 billion. Federal support now is predicted to rise by three percent to nearly $26 billion in 1998-99. Without the cash floor of $12.5 billion, federal support would have fallen to $25.1 billion.

Cuts in federal funding under the Canada Health and Social Transfer were not the only battle scars on the social policy landscape of the 1990s. Ottawa also cut its support for unemployment insurance, subsidized housing and Aboriginal people and failed to deliver on a promise to expand subsidized day care.

Both the Progressive Conservatives and Liberals made cuts to unemployment insurance in the 1990s. The name of the program was eventually changed to employment insurance - a purely cosmetic change that no doubt provided jobs for the people who print stationery and the painters who do the signs at federal offices - but the program itself became a shadow of its former self.

Figures from Human Resources Development Canada show that 88 percent of unemployed workers received UI benefits in 1990. The percentage fell more or less steadily in the years that followed and was down to 43 percent of unemployed workers by the middle of 1997. The reforms in employment insurance made it more difficult for unemployed workers to

get benefits in the first instance, reduced the level of benefits for many recipients, and cut the length of the benefit periods.

Meanwhile, the employment insurance fund, a fund that is made up of contributions by workers and employers which are not immediately needed to pay benefits, is expected to grow to more than $12 billion during the 1997-98 fiscal year. The federal Finance Department said the fund is a contingency against a future downturn in the economy. Critics said the fund was kept large simply because it reduces the size of the federal deficit.

Reduced federal support for employment insurance means more dependency on provincial and territorial welfare programs. Until recently, Ottawa insisted that only ten percent of people who exhausted UI benefits ended up on welfare, but the federal claim was widely disputed by others. Quebec, for example, estimated that the federal UI reforms had pushed some 30,000 new cases onto welfare in the province from 1990 to 1994 and that 46.4 percent of welfare recipients over 30 in 1994-95 were unemployed people who were getting little or no support from the federal government.[2]

In the 1993 federal election campaign, the Liberals had promised more financial support for day care once the economy recovered from the last recession. The specific promise was a total of 150,000 new subsidized day care spaces over a period of three years beginning in the 1995-96 fiscal year at a cost of $720 million.

By the end of 1995, the offer was still on the table, but a new catch was added: provinces would have to come up with half the money for the new program. In June 1996, the revised offer was withdrawn by the Minister of Human Resources Development. The Minister made the provinces a much reduced offer of $250 million over three years to help parents find child care so they could remain at work.

The reason given in Ottawa for the Liberal government's change of heart was lack of provincial interest. Several provincial governments were quick to take issue with that explanation.

Progressive Conservative and Liberal governments also reduced federal support for housing programs in recent years. Under the slogan "Getting Government Right," the federal

government announced in the 1996 budget speech that Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation would phase out its remaining role in "social" or subsidized housing except for housing on Indian reserves. By early 1997, provinces were signing agreements with Ottawa to manage social housing programs started in previous years. Provincial governments will have more flexibility to revamp their housing budgets with a minimum of national standards.

Finally, the federal government's commitments in the area of welfare for Aboriginal people also were compromised in the 1990s. Under the Constitution, Ottawa is responsible for assistance to status Indians living on reserves. In 1992, the federal government gave notice that it would no longer cover the full cost of welfare for the first year that a family moved away from the reserve. Thousands of new cases were added to provincial welfare rolls as a result.

The welfare rates paid by Ottawa for Indians who are still living on reserves also fell as a consequence of provincial and territorial cuts that were made in the wake of the overall squeeze in federal funding. Welfare for status Indians living on a reserve works according to the provincial or territorial welfare system's rules and benefit levels. Most governments cut their basic or special assistance rates and made it harder for people to qualify for welfare, and all of those changes applied equally to people on reserves.

The one advance in federal social policy during the 1990s came in the area of child benefits. Ottawa responded positively to a proposal by provincial and territorial governments to improve benefits for poor families with children. By the time of the 1997 federal budget speech, the proposal amounted to a modest increase in federal child benefits, with the details still being negotiated with provinces and territories.

The basic idea was to create a new Canada Child Tax Benefit for low-income and middle-income families with children. The benefit would replace the current federal Child Tax Benefit, including the working income supplement for low-wage families contained in the federal benefit.

Many low-income families with children who get most of their income from salaries or wages would get very modest increases in benefits under the Canada Child Tax Benefit. However, low-income families on welfare would see any increases clawed back by provincial and territorial governments, and the money clawed back would be "reinvested" in programs for low-wage families with children.

The National Council of Welfare questioned the clawback strategy in a 1997 report entitled Child Benefits: A Small Step Forward. The Council and most other social policy groups urged the federal government to make a more substantial commitment to fighting child and family poverty. The promise of $850 million as a "downpayment" on a new child benefit was dwarfed by the billions of dollars taken out of social programs by successive federal governments in recent years. The Speech from the Throne that opened the 1997 session of Parliament promised an additional $850 million a year sometime during the course of the government's current mandate.

All in all, the cuts in welfare outlined in the chapters that follow should come as no surprise. Given the state of the economy at the start of the decade, the cuts in spending by all levels of government, the loss of national standards for welfare, and a general withdrawal of the federal government from many areas of social policy, the people who depend on welfare to make ends meet were facing even tougher times.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 1990s will be remembered in part for the setbacks in Canadian welfare policy, from the cuts in federal financial support for welfare and social services to the host of measures imposed by provincial and territorial governments that added to the misery of the poorest of the poor.

Strangely enough, the decade could still emerge as a time of renewal for the welfare state, if governments are foresighted enough to take advantage of current opportunities to renegotiate the financial arrangements underlying welfare and other social programs.

The most immediate cause for hope is the promise of a floor of $12.5 billion a year in cash transfers to the provinces and territories made by the Liberal Party during the 1997 federal election campaign. The promise marked a reversal of the wholesale cuts that preoccupied successive federal governments during the first six years of the decade. A sizable cash payment from Ottawa for medicare, post-secondary education, welfare and social services would ease the financial pressure on provinces and territories in the immediate future. That in turn could provide an incentive for the two levels of government to come together and negotiate brand-new financial arrangements for some of Canada's most important social programs.

Recommendation #1: The federal, provincial and territorial governments should agree to new package of financial arrangements for social programs with the following four features:

- abolition of the Canada Health and Social Transfer at the earliest possible date;
- four new "cash-only" deals to allow the federal government to defray the cost of medicare, post-secondary education, welfare and social services;
- legislation to prevent the federal government from making arbitrary and unilateral changes in any of the four cash-only deals; and
- firm guarantees by provincial and territorial governments to respect minimum national standards for welfare.

The Canada Health and Social Transfer was the culmination of a series of social policy blunders made by the federal Finance Department in recent years. Subsequent announcements by the federal government have softened its original financial impact, but the transfer is still bad social policy and should be replaced entirely.

New financial arrangements should be based on federal cash payments rather than the combination of cash payments and taxing powers that Ottawa transferred to the provinces and territories in 1977. The combination of tax transfers and cash payments is simply not sustainable in the long term. It would be better to consider the taxing powers gone for good and concentrate on the cash. Under cash-only arrangements, the size of the federal payments would start at $12.5 billion in the first year.

Federal cash payments under the Canada Health and Social Transfer are intended to cover medicare, post-secondary education, welfare and social services collectively. One reason to have four separate cash deals is to guarantee a sizable federal presence in each of the four areas. The National Council of Welfare strongly believes that the federal government has an obligation to promote the well-being of Canadians regardless of where they live, and we believe each of these four areas is worthy of federal support. Under the Canada Health and Social Transfer, provincial or territorial governments could theoretically use all the federal money for medicare and none for the other three areas.

The four separate cash deals would add up to a minimum of $12.5 billion a year in federal support. The amount of federal money destined for each of the four areas would be one of the issues to be resolved at the bargaining table.

Another reason for four cash deals instead of one is to allow different formulas for determining federal payments in each of the four areas after the first year. The demand for health care and post-secondary education is reasonably stable through all phases of the economic cycle, and provinces and territories have a number of options for controlling costs over the long haul. A formula tied to economic growth or inflation would be appropriate.

The situation is different for welfare. The welfare rolls rise and fall from year to year, sometimes dramatically, at different stages of the economic cycle. The formula for a cash-only deal on welfare should be based on some other measure - perhaps a measure linked to the

unemployment rate in each province or territory. That would allow federal support for welfare to increase when the welfare rolls swell during a recession, and it would allow federal support for welfare to decline in good economic times when many of the people on welfare are able to find jobs.

That leaves the fourth area: social services. Some of the social services once covered by the Canada Assistance Plan are more or less stable from year to year. Others, notably child care, depend primarily on the willingness of provincial and territorial governments to provide subsidies to families with children. The chronic shortage of adequate and affordable child care is a major problem for many families, and it would be wrong to have a formula for day care funding that was simply based on economic growth or inflation.

Whatever deal is struck by governments to replace the Canada Health and Social Transfer should contain iron-clad guarantees by Ottawa to honour its financial commitments to the provinces and territories. Federal-provincial relations have been poisoned in recent years by arbitrary and unilateral decisions by the federal government. If Ottawa wants to improve relations and co-operate with provincial and territorial governments on matters of mutual concern, it absolutely must live up to its own word.

Perhaps the best way of keeping the federal government honest would be to have legislation similar to the legislation that governs changes in the Canada Pension Plan. The pension plan is overseen by both the federal and provincial governments, and changes in the plan require the approval of Ottawa and two-thirds of the provinces with two-thirds of the population. This prevents the federal government from acting on its own.

Similar legislation covering the four cash-only deals on medicare, post-secondary education, welfare and social services could require that changes in financial arrangements are done with the concurrence of at least seven provincial governments.

In return for legislation to guarantee predictable federal financial support for social programs, provinces and territories should agree to minimum national standards for social programs.

There are already minimum national standards for medicare under the Canada Health Act. There are no standards at all for post-secondary education and never have been. Most of the standards for welfare and social services fell by the wayside with the death of the Canada Assistance Plan in 1996.

The National Council of Welfare proposed seven standards for welfare and social services in a report entitled The 1995 Budget and Block Funding: adequacy, accessibility, right of appeal, respect for the individual, accountability, full disclosure and simplicity. We subsequently added non-discrimination to the list.

Provincial and territorial government would doubtless prefer to run welfare and social services on their own, without interference of any kind from the federal government. We believe that minimum national standards are a reasonable burden for them to accept in return for sizable amounts of federal cash.

Some of the standards, such as a right to appeal welfare decisions, should be acceptable to all governments without question. Other standards, notably adequacy of welfare incomes, could require considerable arm-twisting.

Recommendation #2: Welfare rates should be high enough to cover the cost of the necessities of life, as measured by a "market basket" of goods and services. Once set in this manner, rates should not be changed arbitrarily.

Since welfare is a program of last resort for people who have exhausted other means of support, welfare rates should be high enough to cover the cost of the necessities of life. Perhaps the easiest, least intrusive and most sensible way to do this would be to have provinces and territories adopt a market basket approach to welfare rates. Each government would draw up a detailed list of the essential goods and services typical households need every month and the cost of each item in the local marketplace. All the calculations would be made public, so people outside government could judge for themselves whether the amounts provided by welfare are reasonable.

Recommendation #3: Provincial and territorial governments should not be allowed to disentitle entire groups of people from welfare. Alternatives to welfare should be pursued, but

no one should be denied welfare simply because of their age, martial or family status, or state of health.

Three types of programs that would augment or replace welfare have been discussed in social policy circles for many years. One is a pension-like program for people between the ages of 60 and 65. The National Council of Welfare has long believed that the federal Spouse's Allowance program should be expanded to cover all low-income persons 60 to 65, not just selected groups of people 60 to 65. The Council also supports changes in the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans that would allow most people to retire at age 60 without taking a cut in pension benefits.

A second possibility is a national disability insurance program that would be considerably broader than existing programs for people with disabilities. A well-designed national program would cover many of the people with disabilities who are now on welfare and could provide supports that are tailored to the needs of each individual better than the special assistance provided under welfare programs.

A third possibility is a parental work income supplement for low-income parents. The National Council of Welfare has been promoting the idea as a way of overcoming one of the most unavoidable features of the wage system - its inability to relate the value of work in the marketplace to the number of children supported by an individual worker. We proposed a specific design for a supplement, based in part on work income supplements in Quebec and the United States, in our 1994 report A Blueprint for Social Security Reform.

Even if large numbers of current welfare recipients were shifted to other income support programs, there would always be a need for welfare as a social safety net of last resort. The following recommendations are designed to make welfare programs more humane and more sensible.

Recommendation #4: As a matter of right, all applicants and recipients should be able to appeal the decisions of welfare and social service officials. Appeal tribunals should operate in a non-bureaucratic, non-legalistic manner and render their decisions speedily.

Recommendation #5: Every provincial and territorial government should insist on comparable welfare benefits everywhere within its own jurisdiction and should cover 100 percent of the cost of welfare. Municipal governments should not pay for welfare, because they do not have the variety of taxing powers needed to cover increased welfare costs during a long or severe recession.

Recommendation #6: All provinces and territories should allow applicants for welfare and welfare recipients to retain a modest amount of savings for emergencies or special needs. People should not have to be utterly penniless before they are able to apply for welfare.

Recommendation #7: All governments should take a stand against welfare bashing. They should avoid stereotypes in all their public statements about welfare fraud and the lifestyles of welfare recipients.

Recommendation #8: Provincial and territorial governments should accept reasonable limits in the pursuit of welfare fraud. Measures such as fingerprinting which are not routinely applied to other groups of Canadians should not be imposed on welfare recipients. Governments should take pains to distinguish between fraud and administrative errors in their public statements about welfare.

Recommendation #9: Provinces and territories should provide the general public with complete and up-to-date information about welfare and social service programs and policies. At least once a year, governments should publish comprehensive welfare and social service manuals written in everyday language.

Recommendation #10: The federal, provincial and territorial governments should work together to produce a national welfare information database that is timely and readily available to the public. The database should include provincial and territorial welfare caseload statistics, rates and benefits, and detailed information about day care and other subsidized social services.

Finally, the National Council of Welfare believes that the federal, provincial and territorial governments will have to redouble their efforts to create more and better jobs for Canadians. At the same time, they should make changes in both their welfare and labour market programs to increase the incentives to work and to diminish the disincentives to work.

Appendix "H"

"Another Look at Welfare Reform"

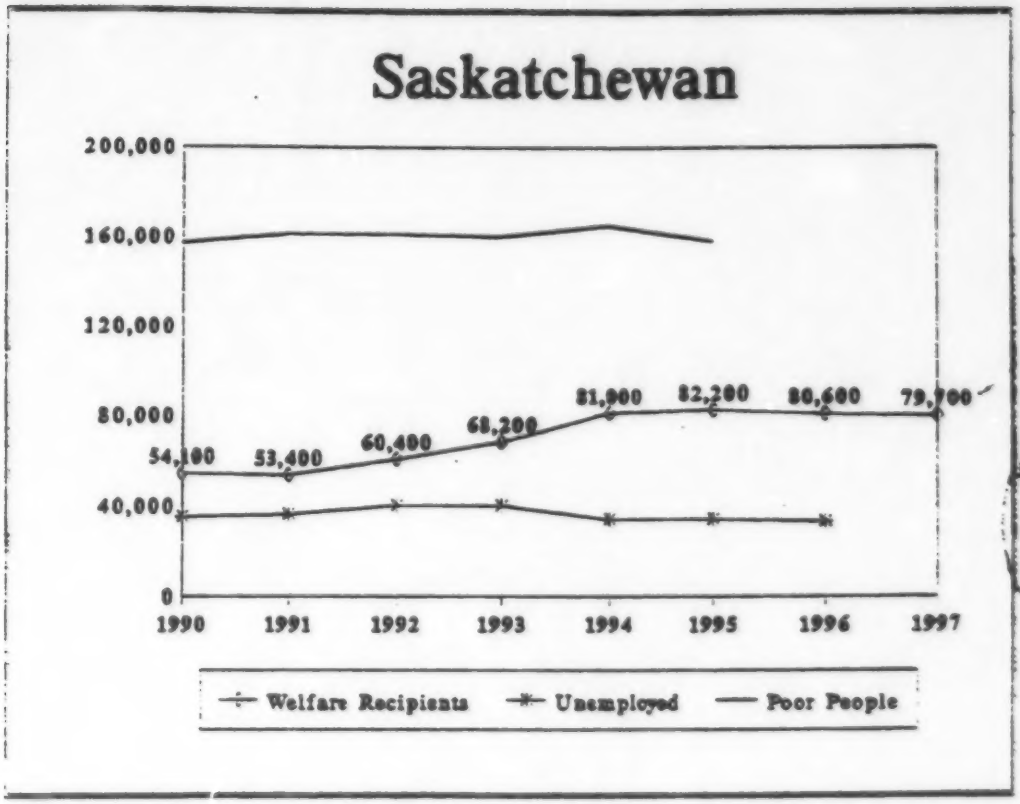
SASKATCHEWAN

Saskatchewan's New Democratic Party lost little time before turning to welfare reform after its election in the fall of 1991. Within months, it released a consultation paper entitled Changing Directions that criticized the previous Conservative government for its inadequate welfare rates, harsh controls, arbitrary case closures and a general undermining of the dignity of people on welfare. The paper suggested positive reforms based on better communication with recipients and more compassion. On the issue of rates, the paper said only that changes would be made as the province's fiscal situation permitted.

Welfare reforms in 1992 were based on Changing Directions and the input from over 250 groups during public consultations. Most of the changes were administrative in nature, and they were made to improve the treatment of people on welfare. The province eased the mandatory cheque pick-ups and job search reports of the previous government. Welfare staff working on fraud investigations were reassigned to collaborate with recipients on case planning. Intrusive verification procedures and arbitrary case closings became the exception rather than the rule.

In the summer of 1992, single parents were reclassified as unemployable until their youngest child turned six. The former government considered a single-parent mother employable as soon as her youngest child reached the age of one. Other administrative changes during 1992 improved the advocacy and appeal systems, overpayment recovery policies, the treatment of people living together, and assistance policies concerning needy youth and students.

The government standardized its long-term and short-term welfare rates in August 1992 by eliminating a lower benefit scale which applied to employables for their first three months on welfare. Basic rates were also simplified: $195 a month for each adult plus the first child in a single-parent family and $155 a month each for any other children. Special supplements for the disabled and residents of the northern part of the province went up, as did allowances for most boarders and personal allowances for people in residential facilities. Low-income seniors saw provincial income supplements go up by $10 a month in October.



Standardization and simplification did not really address the issue of rate adequacy. From 1991 through 1993, the years just before and just after rate restructuring, the incomes of single employable people on welfare went up by about ten percent after inflation. For other types of households, the trend was downward.

In its 1993 budget, the Saskatchewan government gave notice that it was shooting for a balanced budget by the 1996-97 fiscal year. Budget measures included some cuts to hospitals, special care homes, dental services and prescription drug subsidies. People on welfare were exempted from the cuts to dental and drug services.

The budget also promised to increase welfare assistance to families with children, working poor families with children, and poor seniors. Rates were increased in July 1993 by $5 a month for children in welfare families. The same month, income supplements under the

province's Family Income Plan were raised by $5 a month for each child as a prelude to a proposed new provincial child benefit for working poor families. The budget also pledged more money to support services for troubled families and young single parents.

The government made an administrative change in April 1993 that helped many welfare families more than a normal rate increase would have done. That month, Saskatchewan started paying the actual cost of utilities for welfare households instead of using a utility allowance schedule. Many households had high heating bills because of poorly insulated housing, and their utility costs were higher than the maximum allowance.

During the summer of 1993, the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development stopped paying welfare to Treaty Indians moving off the reserve. Saskatchewan expected provincial welfare rolls to jump by about 10,000 people. In the end, nearly 13,000 new people joined the welfare rolls between March 1993 and March 1994. This was almost double the number of new people on welfare during the two previous years, despite the fact that the employment situation started improving in 1994.

The 1994 budget was tabled at a time when welfare caseloads and costs were spiralling upwards. Despite federal cuts to unemployment insurance and welfare for off-reserve Indians, the province would stay the course to a balanced budget by 1996-97. There would be no big welfare improvements for the time being, but there would be no big cuts either. The employment figures were getting much better, and the budget presented a number of measures to further stimulate economic growth. The government committed over $4.4 million under the Action Plan for Children for measures to support children, families and communities. The Action Plan was a joint initiative involving eight Saskatchewan government departments, along with community groups, agencies and organizations across the province. Since 1992-93, it had focused on issues such as family poverty, supporting youth at risk, prevention and nutrition programs, and early childhood development.

Saskatchewan's economic good times continued into 1995, when the government tabled its first balanced budget in 12 years. It was the first province to curb its deficit, and it did so without cuts to existing programs and services. For 1995, the Saskatchewan government offered cuts in income taxes, a new training and job assistance program for youth and big public investments in economic development, but no welfare reforms.

A week before the provincial budget, Ottawa tabled its own budget. The federal government announced that the provinces were in for big cuts in transfer payments for health, post-secondary education, welfare and social services in 1996-97. Saskatchewan started public consultations which continued into 1996 on how to adjust to the federal cuts. During the 1995-96 fiscal year, provincial officials met with over 250 groups.

In January 1996, the government released a welfare reform discussion paper, entitled Redesigning Social Assistance: Preparing for the New Century. The paper pointed to cuts in unemployment insurance, welfare and assistance to off-reserve Indians in particular. On the other hand, it said the provincial economy was healthy and Saskatchewan had the lowest unemployment rate in the country. But there were many people with low education or skill levels, and child poverty had increased "significantly" over the previous 15 years. There was a need for better work incentives in the welfare system, to make jobs more rewarding than social assistance.

The discussion paper's proposals were thin on detail and had no price tags, but they pointed to major changes down the road.

The first of the major proposals was a new Saskatchewan Child Benefit, a monthly income-tested payment that would have the nominal effect of taking children off welfare. It would be also be paid to low-income families with children which were not receiving welfare. The government would offer supplementary health care coverage for people with children leaving welfare.

Secondly, a Working Income Supplement would provide monthly top-ups based on earnings and child maintenance payments received by single parents. Parents on welfare were losing a dollar of their cheques for every dollar of child support they received. The proposal would encourage them to pursue their right to child support. The discussion paper made no mention of benefit levels or other program characteristics.

One of the more controversial proposals of the discussion paper was Youth Futures. The government said that welfare would no longer be granted to people under age 22 unless their families were unable to provide financially for them or in circumstances of family breakdown. Any person under 22 receiving welfare as a single person would be required to participate in

school, training or work experience programs. Many social advocacy groups felt that Youth Futures was just another form of workfare for young people in need.[37]

Under a reformed welfare system, a single provincial training allowance would be paid to training participants, rather than the different allowance levels that were currently in use for welfare recipients, people with disabilities and Aboriginal people. The government said it would help single parents on welfare to obtain child maintenance orders. On the issue of accountability, it would tighten up the administration of welfare to assure taxpayers that welfare is paid only to people who have no other resources. In recent years, the government hired 30 verification workers, started matching computer welfare files with other provinces, and boosted collection of overpayments.

Within days of the release of Redesigning Social Assistance, Saskatchewan media reported a generally favourable response to the proposals. Some social agencies were guardedly optimistic about the reform package, noting that Saskatchewan was proposing a gentler approach than other provinces. Over the next month or two, several editorials and articles by social advocates praised the government for its fresh and innovative proposals for welfare reform.

The discussion paper had its dissenters as well. The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission said that the proposal concerning parental responsibility for welfare applicants over the age of majority would contravene the province's human rights code. Opposition members in the Legislature said that the government's proposals concerning 18- to 21-year-olds would take away jobs from students because there was no job creation component in the welfare reforms. Some social advocacy groups said it was unfair to force people to support their children beyond the age of majority. They also criticized the government for proposing that young people on welfare should be forced to look for work when meaningful jobs were so hard to find.[38]

The 1996 Saskatchewan budget focused on economic growth and modest income tax cuts. Funding for the Child Action Plan went up by $4 million to $10 million for 1996-97. Under the plan, more assistance would be provided in the areas of educational supports for special needs and at-risk students, child care worker subsidies, measles immunization, day care subsidies for teen parents, post-adoption services and youth justice.

Overall, the budget did not have a major effect on people on welfare in Saskatchewan. There was no additional money for new welfare reforms. By the end of the year, the government had not made any improvements to its welfare system, but it had not made any cuts either. Compared with some other provinces, Saskatchewan had done better for its welfare recipients by doing nothing.

In March 1997, the province released a progress report on welfare reforms entitled Children, Families and Independence: Social Assistance Redesign. The report criticized the federal government for its February 1997 budget which delayed the start of a new federal child benefit until July 1998. The province committed $6 million in new spending under a "transition to the child benefit" package for 1997-98.

The lion's share of the new funding went to increase income supplements to low-income families under the Saskatchewan Family Income Plan from $105 to $120 a month per child starting in May 1997. The Family Income Plan benefit reduction rate was improved at the same time. Benefits now go down by 40 cents for every dollar of income over $850 a month, compared with 50 cents for every dollar over $725 a month under the old system. The improvements in the Family Income Plan will cost about $3.3 million for 1997-98. The rest of the $6 million in the budget was to child care capital grants ($1 million), a child nutrition and development program ($500,000), northern community development ($200,000) and school supplies and fees for children on welfare ($500,000).

Building Independence - Investing in Families
Saskatchewan Employment Supplement (SES)
Saskatchewan Child Benefit (SCB)
Questions and Answers

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WHY REDESIGN IS NEEDED

Why change children's benefits?

As a community we have a special responsibility for children. In Saskatchewan over 31,000 children currently rely on social assistance.

Information obtained from Statistics Canada indicates that in 1995, 57,000 or 21.6% of all Saskatchewan children lived in poverty. This is not an acceptable situation.

Our government remains committed to reducing and eliminating child poverty. As a step in this direction, existing benefits for children will be replaced with two new programs starting in July 1998 - the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement. These benefits will replace children's basic allowance under the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) and Family Income Plan (FIP) benefits.

The Saskatchewan Child Benefit, in combination with federal children's benefits, will remove children's basic benefits from welfare and assist parents with the cost of raising their children. The amount of Saskatchewan Child Benefit will decrease as federal funding for the National Child Benefit Supplement is increased. The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will provide an incentive to increase employment and maintenance income, and help low income parents with child-related costs of working.

The two new programs will effectively remove children from welfare, and make it easier for low income parents to support their families on employment or maintenance income without resorting to welfare. Because the programs will remove barriers to leaving welfare and improve incentives for parents to increase their incomes, the new initiatives will help parents take advantage of employment opportunities, and should, over time, make an important contribution to reducing child poverty and family welfare dependency.

Why not just reduce benefits to make people choose work over welfare?

Benefit reductions and restrictions have been tried in the past, but had little or no long term effect on welfare dependency levels. In fact, past cuts to social assistance may have contributed to persistently high child poverty rates in recent years.

Although there are some instances where social assistance benefits are higher than prevailing wage rates, benefit levels still fall well short of most accepted poverty lines. Rather than forcing families deeper into poverty by benefit cuts, Saskatchewan has chosen to make structural changes to programs that protect current benefit levels, but also make work more attractive and rewarding. This will encourage attachment to the labour force and in the long term should reduce dependency.

Why not just increase welfare benefits?

When our social assistance program was started in the 1960s, it served only 3-4% of the public, and few of these were people with labour force attachment. Because of changes to the economy, and weakening of other programs like Employment Insurance, many more people have been forced in recent years to rely on welfare. Disincentives which exist within the current social assistance program, make it difficult for these people to leave the welfare system.

Increasing welfare rates would bring even more families into the system, by moving thresholds up the income distribution. This would trap even more families in the welfare system with its barriers and disincentives.

Saskatchewan wants to make families better off, not expand the welfare system. This province has chosen to provide alternatives which broaden the base of support for children, and help parents take advantage of the labour market. We believe these changes will have a more positive long term outcome for low income families than just raising welfare rates.

What else is government doing to address child poverty and other childrens' issues?

The Saskatchewan government is committed to reducing and preventing poverty. The Saskatchewan Action Plan for Children is a long-term strategy to enhance the well-being of Saskatchewan children, youth and families. Work continues across sectors in government and in communities.

Since the inception of the Action Plan, the Saskatchewan government's contributions to new or enhanced programs and services for children and families under the Plan will exceed $53 million annually, including $18 million towards the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Saskatchewan Employment Supplement to address child and family poverty.

Accomplishments are outlined in the report *Our Children...Our Future: Saskatchewan Action Plan for Children - Four Years Later* released November 20, 1997 on National Child Day.

SASKATCHEWAN'S COMMITMENT

What is Saskatchewan doing that is different than other provinces/territories?

As a provincial government we have committed ourselves to a far reaching and progressive welfare reform which will eventually replace traditional welfare as we know it. Our new programs will help poor parents with the cost of raising their children and will help them with the child-related costs of working.

Beginning in July 1998, Saskatchewan will change provincial income security programs so that the base of families who are eligible for support will be broadened to include families on social assistance and many additional low income working families. In addition to the $15 Million dollars committed for reinvestment through the National Child Benefit, Saskatchewan has provided an additional $37.5 Million in new provincial funding to establish innovative new programs for children.

The Saskatchewan Child Benefit will "top-up" the National Child Benefit Supplement to the current level of social assistance benefits for children. The amount of provincial benefit will decline as federal funding for children's income support is increased. The combined federal and provincial benefit will be available to low income families, whether they are on social assistance or not, and will ensure that parents can go to work without losing support for children's needs.

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement is a monthly benefit to assist low income working parents to increase their employment and maintenance income by helping with child-related work costs, and by providing greater benefit to the family from maintenance payments. The Supplement will reduce the inequities parents now face in the labour market and support their decision to work.

The Family Health Benefits program will provide supplementary health benefits to all low income families receiving the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and/or the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement.

The new programs will assist over 40,000 families. About 17,000 of these families currently receive social assistance or Family Income Plan benefits.

THE NEW PROGRAMS

What are the new programs in ***Building Independence - Investing in Families***?

The *Building Independence* strategy introduces three new programs to three others previously introduced. The strategy is an investment in our children, our families, our society and our future. The three new programs are:

- The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement is a monthly benefit to assist low income working parents to increase their employment and maintenance income by helping with child-related work costs, and by providing greater benefit to the family from maintenance payments. The supplement will reduce the inequities parents now face in the labour market and support their decision to work.

- **The Saskatchewan Child Benefit** is a monthly allowance provided for all children of low income families. It will assist low income working families with the cost of raising children. It will help families remain in the workforce rather than falling onto social assistance to meet their children's basic needs. The Saskatchewan Child Benefit, combined with federal child benefits, will remove children's basic benefits from welfare.

- **The Family Health Benefits** provides supplementary health benefits to low income working families to ensure they do not fall onto social assistance because of the health needs of their children and to help families on social assistance enter the workforce without losing child health benefits.

Three initiatives previously implemented:

- **The Provincial Training Allowance** administered by Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training is a monthly allowance for students enrolled in adult basic education or related courses. The Allowance assists low income individuals and families to access employment and training opportunities.

- **Youth Futures** administered by Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training is a unique pilot project in Prince Albert which works to link youth aged 18-21 to education and skills training programs and the workforce. It has been developed, and is managed, through a community/government partnership.

- **Enhanced Accountability Measures** – over the past number of years, Social Services has enhanced its accountability measures. These controls are now among the most effective in the country. Initiatives undertaken include matching of client files with federal and provincial government departments and agencies and western provinces, an annual program audit and, 30 verification workers who review client circumstances and prepare police fraud referrals.

What is the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement?

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement is a monthly payment to assist parents with the child-related costs of going to work. The supplement will help social assistance families make the transition to work, and will help all low income parents compete more effectively in the labour market.

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement is calculated as a percentage of income from employment or maintenance. For every dollar of earnings or maintenance income above $125 per month, the program will add a supplement ranging from 25 - 45%, depending on family size.

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The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will reach a maximum when income reaches $825 per month (about the point where the family leaves welfare), and then be reduced after income exceeds $1075 per month. The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement ensures that parents have an incentive to improve family income through work, and through pursuing maintenance from non-custodial parents.

Up to 19,000 families (40,000 children) will be eligible for benefits. Of these, only 4,000 families currently receive social assistance. 15,000 families who may qualify for the supplement do not currently receive assistance.

What is the Saskatchewan Child Benefit?

The Saskatchewan Child Benefit is a monthly allowance which will assist low income families with the cost of raising their children and will help low income working families to remain in the work force rather than having to fall onto social assistance because of their children's basic needs. The new benefit will allow low income parents to work and keep their child benefits.

The Saskatchewan Child Benefit will change the province's income support system for children from a needs based benefit (through the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan) to an income-tested monthly benefit. The benefit will be payable on behalf of each child under 18 in low income families. It will be combined with the federal Canada Child Tax Benefit and be paid to low income families based on their previous year's income as reported to Revenue Canada. For families on social assistance, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit will replace their children's basic allowance.

The Saskatchewan Child Benefit starts with a basic benefit level which is reduced as income rises above $15,921 per year. Over time, the amount of the benefit will decline as federal funding for the National Child Benefit Supplement increases.

Low income working families, whether or not they are on welfare, will qualify. By providing children's benefits outside the welfare system, families will need less welfare and, will be able to leave welfare at lower levels of earnings or, may never have to apply for welfare. Because the Saskatchewan Child Benefit continues as income levels rise there will be less pressure on families to move toward welfare and barriers to labour market participation will be reduced.

Up to 40,000 families (80,000 children) will receive benefits. Of these, 17,000 families presently receive social assistance or Family Income Plan benefits and 23,000 do not currently receive benefits.

PREPARED BY: Income Security Programs, Saskatchewan Social Services

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What is the Family Health Benefits program?

The Family Health Benefits program will be administered by the Department of Health. It will provide supplementary health benefits to low income working families to ensure they do not fall onto social assistance because of the health needs of their children and to help families on social assistance enter the workforce without losing child health benefits.

The cost of health services is a significant barrier for families who are trying to leave the welfare program. Families on the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan and the Family Income Plan receive supplementary health benefits which provide dental, formulary drug, optometric and other health needs for free, or at reduced cost.

All low income families who receive the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and/or the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will receive supplementary health benefits. The number of families and children receiving supplementary health benefits will more than double from those currently receiving coverage from being on social assistance.

Children will receive the same level of supplementary benefits as children on the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan currently receive. Low income parents, not on social assistance, will receive a more limited package of health benefits.

Individuals and families funded through the Provincial Training Allowance or Youth Futures program receive the same level of supplementary health benefits as social assistance recipients.

What is the National Child Benefit?

Saskatchewan has taken a leadership role in advocating for the reform of children's benefits and supports the plan to create a National Child Benefit system. The National Child Benefit is an important element in a strategy to combat child poverty and will establish a national income support standard for children.

The National Child Benefit is a joint initiative of the federal government, provinces and territories. Goals of the initiative are to help prevent and reduce the depth of child poverty; to promote attachment to the work force; and, to reduce overlap and duplication between federal and provincial programs.

Under the initiative, in July 1998, the federal government will introduce a new benefit called the National Child Benefit Supplement. This benefit will eventually replace current benefits for children in provincial and territorial social assistance programs. As federal funding for children's income support programs increases, provinces and territories have agreed, that savings realized through reduced social assistance benefits would be reinvested in complementary programs targeted at improving work incentives, benefits and services for low income families with children.

Removing children's benefits from welfare, and replacing them with an income-tested family benefit is consistent with Saskatchewan's reform goals. The National Child Benefit will help Saskatchewan achieve these goals.

The National Child Benefit Supplement converts a portion of current children's welfare to an income-tested benefit. The remaining child benefit for Saskatchewan families will also be removed from welfare and paid through a new income-tested program - the Saskatchewan Child Benefit. The provincial and federal children's benefits will be combined into one payment resulting in an efficient and integrated administrative system. Eventually, the National Child Benefit Supplement will eliminate the need for Saskatchewan child income support benefits.

What will happen during the next two years of the National Child Benefit initiative?

The federal government committed $850 million to its participation in the National Child Benefit for the program year beginning in July 1998. This funding will be used to enrich the Canada Child Tax Benefit. As the federal benefit increases, provinces and territories will decrease benefits for social assistance recipients. The funds which provinces/territories would otherwise have spent on social assistance must be reinvested in complementary programs targeted at improving work incentives, benefits and services for low income families with children.

In Saskatchewan, the reinvestment money of approximately $15 million, will be added to new provincial funding of $37.5 million to implement the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Family Health Benefits.

The federal government has committed a further $850 million to further enrich the Canada Child Tax Benefit over the next two years – $425 million as of July 1999 and $425 million as of July 2000.

The federal government has committed to working with provincial and territorial governments over the coming year to determine how this new funding can best be used to improve opportunities for children of low income families in all regions of Canada.

PREPARED BY: Income Security Programs, Saskatchewan Social Services

DATE PREPARED: June 1, 1998

COST OF REDESIGN

Won't Redesign cost us a lot more money?

Broadening the income security base for families is the most efficient way to use public funds to fight child poverty. It allows us to use modest investment in direct benefits to help parents lever much more income from the labour market. By reducing barriers to work and facilitating a smoother transition to employment more people will become self-reliant in the long term. The Saskatchewan government believes this will significantly reduce both child poverty and government benefit costs over the long term.

As part of the National Child Benefit, an increase in federal funding for children's income support programs will occur. Provinces and territories have agreed that savings realized through reduced social assistance benefits would be reinvested in complementary programs targeted at improving work incentives, benefits and services for low income families with children. In Saskatchewan these savings will be used to help offset the cost of the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Saskatchewan Employment Supplement. As federal funding for children's income support continues to increase, the level of provincial incremental funding will continue to decrease.

BENEFIT LEVELS

How much is the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement?

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement is determined by the number of children and the amount of employment and maintenance income in excess of $125 per month as follows:

1 child	25% to a maximum of $175
2 children	30% to a maximum of $210
3 children	35% to a maximum of $245
4 children	40% to a maximum of $280
5+ children	45% to a maximum of $315

The maximum Saskatchewan Employment Supplement is reached when gross employment and maintenance income totals $825 per month. When gross family income exceeds $1075 per month benefits are taxed back at a rate of 25%.

How much is the Saskatchewan Child Benefit?

The amount of Saskatchewan Child Benefit is based on the number of children and the income reported to Revenue Canada for the previous tax year. The Saskatchewan Child Benefit is a "top-up" to the federal National Child Benefit Supplement.

For annual income up to $15,921 per year:

One Child	$ 75 per month
Two Children	$ 167 per month
Each additional child	$ 98 per month

For annual income above $15,921 per year benefits will be reduced at rates which vary by family size. Most families will be eligible for benefits until their income reaches $25,921 per year (larger families may qualify at income levels above $25,921).

How much are the combined federal/provincial children's benefits?

TOTAL SASKATCHEWAN CHILD BENEFIT/CANADA CHILD TAX BENEFIT (MONTHLY)					
INCOME	1 CHILD	2 CHILDREN	3 CHILDREN	4 CHILDREN	5 + CHILDREN
< $15,921	$210	$421	$637	$854	$1,071
$18,000	$184	$368	$559	$761	$966
$20,000	$159	$318	$484	$672	$865
$22,000	$134	$268	$408	$582	$765
$24,000	$109	$218	$333	$493	$664
$26,000	$84	$169	$260	$403	$563
$28,000	$80	$161	$252	$343	$454
$30,000	$76	$153	$244	$335	$426

When will the combined Canada Child Tax Benefit/Saskatchewan Child Benefit payment be issued?

The payment schedule for July 1998 to June 1999:

July 1998	July 20, 1998
August 1998	August 20, 1998
September 1998	September 18, 1998
October 1998	October 20, 1998
November 1998	November 20, 1998
December 1998	December 11, 1998
January 1999	January 20, 1999
February 1999	February 19, 1999
March 1999	March 19, 1999
April 1999	April 20, 1999
May 1999	May 20, 1999
June 1999	June 18, 1999

Which line of the income tax return is used to calculate the Canada Child Tax Benefit and Saskatchewan Child Benefit?

Eligibility for Saskatchewan Child Benefit and federal children's benefits will be determined from income reported on line 236 (net income) on the previous year's income tax return.

Are the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement taxable?

No. Revenue Canada has advised that as the new programs are intended to pay for children's needs they are not taxable.

Can the combined Canada Child Tax Benefit/Saskatchewan Child Benefit payment be garnisheed?

Revenue Canada cannot direct the Canada Child Tax Benefit/Saskatchewan Child Benefit to a third party. However, once the payment is deposited into a bank account, it is subject to potential garnishment action.

Will Revenue Canada reduce the federal Canada Child Tax Benefit to recover overpayments?

Yes. Revenue Canada will reduce the Canada Child Tax Benefit by 50% of the monthly benefit level until the overpayment is fully recovered. In cases of hardship (i.e. families on social assistance) recipients may contact Revenue Canada to request a reduction in the recovery rate. Saskatchewan will not provide benefits either through the Saskatchewan Child Benefit or the social assistance program to replace the amount recovered.

How will the new programs work to keep people off of social assistance?

We need to ensure that it is more attractive to work than to receive assistance and that those who do work are better off for it. The new programs have been designed to improve families' lives based on their work effort. By providing a financial incentive to work and extending supplementary health benefits to low income families, the need to return to social assistance should be lessened.

If I'm a parent on social assistance, will I have more, less, or the same amount of money for the care of my child?

With the introduction of the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, no families with children will lose benefits. Families with gross wage income or maintenance income over $125 per month will receive more benefits. For the first time, families on social assistance who receive maintenance income will benefit directly from this income.

We will remove the barriers to work which currently exist under the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan program and "make work pay" for families. In addition, many low income families who currently do not qualify for Saskatchewan Assistance Plan or Family Income Plan will qualify for financial and health benefits under the new programs.

How will the new benefits respond to changing circumstances?

The Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Canada Child Tax Benefit will be based on previous year's income and family structure as reported to Revenue Canada. If the combined benefit payment is insufficient to replace the children's basic allowance in social assistance cases, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit will be adjusted to address the shortfall.

Changes in circumstances (family composition, address, etc.) can be reported at any time to Revenue Canada. Benefits will be adjusted accordingly.

For the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, all families must confirm their circumstances on at least a quarterly basis. If there is a change in income, clients are required to report the change when it occurs by telephone. Changes in family structure must be reported to Saskatchewan Health.

What about parents who earned a lower amount of money last year and now have higher employment income? Will benefits continue to be paid to families who now have "high" income?

Since the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and the Canada Child Tax Benefit are always based on the previous year's tax return, there could be some instances where benefits will be paid to some families whose income in the current year is higher than the previous year. The benefit will only last for a year and will assist in the transition to long term self-sufficiency.

What about parents who earned a high level of income last year but earn less this year? Will there be help for them?

Since the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and the Canada Child Tax Benefit are always based on the previous year's tax return, there may be some exceptional cases where families with low income this year either do not receive or receive reduced children's benefits. For families with reduced income who are on social assistance, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit will be adjusted by the province to address the shortfall.

Will the department continue to deduct a portion of the federal Child Tax Benefit from social assistance cheques?

No. The Saskatchewan Child Benefit provides an opportunity to completely eliminate this remaining overlap between federal and provincial programs. The $34.88 per child per month will no longer be assessed as income for families on the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan, and Saskatchewan Child Benefit rates will be set so that the net effect on families is neutral.

How many families will benefit?

Currently, there are about 14,700 families who receive Saskatchewan Assistance Plan benefits and 2,300 families who receive Family Income Plan benefits. It is estimated that over 40,000 families will receive the Saskatchewan Child Benefit including 14,000 families who will also receive social assistance.

Over 19,000 families will receive the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement including 3,000 current social assistance families and 1,000 families who currently receive Family Income Plan benefits (FIP will be retired with the introduction of the new programs).

Will any families lose benefits with the introduction of the new programs?

No. With the introduction of the National Child Benefit, the provinces/territories and the federal government have agreed that the overall level of support for families receiving social assistance would not be reduced.

For families on social assistance who experience a decrease in total resources because of benefit restructuring the Saskatchewan Child Benefit will be automatically adjusted to address the shortfall.

For families receiving social assistance in July 1998 who no longer qualify when the new programs are introduced, social assistance level supplementary health benefits will be provided for a 12 month transitional period.

Families who do not qualify for social assistance but would have under the rules of the current social assistance program (i.e. prior to July 1, 1998) will contact their local Social Services office and be referred to a central Saskatchewan Child Benefit worker for an assessment of their circumstances. In cases where a shortfall exists, a provincial Saskatchewan Child Benefit adjustment will be provided.

Family Income Plan clients who, under the new programs, would receive less than their June 1998 Family Income Plan entitlement, will receive an automatic Saskatchewan Child Benefit adjustment to continue the level of the June 1998 Family Income Plan entitlement for a 12 month transitional period or until their family circumstances change.

For each family eligible to receive an adjustment or "backfill", a provincial payment will be provided about the 20th of each month.

How many families will leave the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan caseload as a result of redesign?

We estimate that when the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Saskatchewan Employment Supplement programs are first introduced, about 700 families will no longer require support through the social assistance program.

In the long term, it is expected there will be an ongoing movement away from welfare as families are able to gain more independence and improved labour force attachment.

How will the redesign help families get off social assistance – these new programs look like efforts to reduce the caseload numbers by simply renaming the benefits.

The Saskatchewan Child Benefit, together with the new federal child benefit, will reduce the amount of wage income families need to earn to leave welfare. The new benefits also ensure that children's needs are met as parents move into the labour market.

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will put more income into the hands of working poor families and will help offset some of the costs parents incur when they go to work. In addition, the supplement will provide an incentive to increase maintenance income.

The Family Health Benefits program also makes the transition to work easier, as it ensures children's health costs are not a deterrent to leaving welfare.

The new programs will also work to prevent future welfare dependency. Extending children's benefits beyond current welfare levels as income increases will encourage parents to increase earnings and reduce the need for falling back onto social assistance for children's needs.

What will happen to the Family Income Plan?

Applications will be accepted by the Family Income Plan until May 31, 1998. The last Family Income Plan benefits will be paid for June 1998. Families receiving Family Income Plan who have employment or support income over $125 per month will be encouraged to apply for the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement. Health benefits provided to Family Income Plan families will be extended until nominations for Family Health Benefits are completed.

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement and Saskatchewan Child Benefit provide no apparent benefit to Saskatchewan Assistance Plan clients without employment or maintenance income or with income under $125 per month. So why go through the administrative changes?

The new programs will provide benefits to more than double the number of families who currently receive Saskatchewan Assistance Plan benefits and, will provide opportunities for families to improve their lives. The new programs will make it possible for low income parents to take advantage of work opportunities and make work the right choice for families.

Current programs leave families with little or no benefit from employment or maintenance income. Often families are no better off, and could even be worse off, by choosing to work than they would be if they stayed on welfare.

How will parents receive benefits?

For families on social assistance, adult benefits, shelter cost support and special needs allowances will continue to be issued at the start of each month. Provincial children's benefits will be combined with federal child benefits and paid about the 20th of each month, beginning in July, 1998.

In July, 1998, families on social assistance will receive their usual benefits. About July 20, 1998, they will receive the combined Saskatchewan Child Benefit and the new Canada Child Tax Benefit. In August, Saskatchewan Assistance Plan benefits will be adjusted to remove the basic allowance for children and will include other changes resulting from the new programs.

No separate application is required to receive the combined payment. Parents will have the option of payment by cheque or by electronic funds transfer (direct deposit). Most families currently on social assistance get cheques but a majority of families on the federal benefit system prefer direct deposit.

To receive the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, application is made by contacting the *Building Independence - Investing in Families* at 1-888-488-6385, or for Regina callers, 787-4723 after June 1, 1998. To achieve maximum efficiency and for client convenience, the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will be paid by direct deposit about the end of each month.

Families who receive the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and/or the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will automatically receive supplementary health coverage under the Family Health Benefits program.

Why is the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement paid only through direct deposit?

SES will be administered by a very modern system which is virtually paper free. Payments will be made by direct deposit (electronic funds transfer) to eliminate the danger of lost or stolen cheques and to achieve maximum administrative efficiency.

How will families know how much they are receiving?

SCB: In July of each year, families will receive an eligibility notice from Revenue Canada explaining how federal and provincial child benefits for the upcoming 12 months have been calculated.

Saskatchewan families will receive a quarterly statement provided by the province identifying the amount of benefit paid during that period.

Inquiries may also be directed to Revenue Canada's toll free number at any time.

SES: Confirmation of direct deposits to banks, inquiries about benefits and applications may be directed to the *Building Independence - Investing in Families* Call Centre, after June 1, 1998 at 1-888-488-6385, or for Regina callers, 787-4723.

A T5007 form to report the annual SES benefit will be provided to clients.

Will the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement be considered as income when calculating the Child Care subsidy amounts?

No. the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will not be considered as income in calculating the subsidy amount.

How will the Provincial Training Allowance program treat Saskatchewan Employment Supplement or Saskatchewan Child Benefit income?

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will not be considered a resource in the assessment of Provincial Training Allowance eligibility.

Effective August 1, 1998, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit will be considered as $125 per month available for each child as declared on the Provincial Training Allowance application. If the applicant provides proof that they do not receive the full $125, the assessment of this resource will be reduced and any adjustment will be issued through the Provincial Training Allowance.

WHO QUALIFIES?

How does a family qualify for the Saskatchewan Child Benefit? How do I access this new program?

Families will qualify for the Saskatchewan Child Benefit based on their family's previous year's income as reported to Revenue Canada. The Saskatchewan Child Benefit payment will be combined with the Canada Child Tax Benefit.

No application is required for the Saskatchewan Child Benefit, however, an income tax return must be filed to determine entitlement. Changes in family composition must be reported to Revenue Canada.

Inquiries may be directed to Revenue Canada's toll free phone number or the *Building Independence* Call Centre at 1-888-488-6385 or, for Regina callers, 787-4723.

How does a family qualify for the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement? How do I access this new program?

To access the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, families will call the *Building Independence* Call Centre at 1-888-488-6385, or for Regina callers, 787-4723 to provide information to determine eligibility, and then report employment and maintenance income monthly. Applications will be taken after June 1, 1998.

Does the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement apply to couples or singles without children?

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement is available only to families with children. Singles/childless couples will still qualify for the earnings exemption under Saskatchewan Assistance Plan.

Low income families leaving welfare face many disadvantages when they join the workforce because children add additional health, transportation, clothing and child care expenses to the cost of working. The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement is designed to offset some of these expenses and reduce inequities between working parents and members of the labour force who don't have children.

Can farmers receive the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement?

Farmers may apply for the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement. Eligibility for the supplement depends on the number of children in the family and the amount of gross farm income.

Farm income is calculated by taking the gross farm income reported to Revenue Canada on the 1997 tax return minus 60% (for allowable farm expenses) divided by 12.

Example:

Gross farm income reported to Revenue Canada:	$60,000
Minus: (60% for allowable farm expenses)	- 36,000
Annual farm income	$24,000
Divided by 12 = monthly farm income eligible for supplement	$2,000

This income will be considered as part of total family income to determine eligibility for the supplement.

If I didn't have farm income last year, but am farming now, can I receive the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement?

Eligibility for the supplement would be calculated using the amount of gross farm income you earned last month minus 60% for allowable farm expenses.

Example:

Gross farm income earned last month	$2,000
Minus: (60% for allowable expenses)	-1,200
Farm income eligible for supplement	$ 800

This income will be considered as part of total family income to determine eligibility for the supplement.

How did you pick 60% for allowable expenses for farm expenses?

Research indicates 60% of gross farm income is a reasonable estimate of allowable farm expenses.

Can self-employed people (i.e. babysitters, hairdressers, etc.) receive the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement?

Eligibility for the supplement depends on the number of children in the family and the amount of gross self-employment income.

Self-employment income is calculated by taking the gross self-employment income reported to Revenue Canada on the 1997 tax return minus 60% (for allowable expenses) divided by 12.

Example:

Gross self employment income reported to Revenue Canada:	$20,000
Minus: (60% for allowable expenses)	- 12,000
Annual self-employment income	$ 8,000
Divided by 12 = monthly self-employment income eligible for supplement	$666.67

This income will be considered as part of total family income to determine eligibility for the supplement.

How did you pick 60% for allowable expenses for self-employment income?

Research indicates 60% of gross income is a reasonable estimate of allowable self-employment expenses.

What if didn't have self-employment income last year, but am self-employed now?

Eligibility for the supplement would be calculated using the amount of gross self-employment income you earned last month minus 60% for allowable expenses.

Example:

Gross self-employment income earned last month	$1,000
Minus: (60% for allowable expenses)	- 600
Self-employment income eligible for supplement	$ 400

This income will be considered as part of total family income to determine eligibility for the supplement.

Can people under 18 get the new benefits?

Yes. There are no age restrictions on eligibility for the new programs. Parents under the age of 18 will be subject to the same eligibility rules as other applicants.

Eligibility for the Saskatchewan Child Benefit will require the youth file their own income tax return, be the primary caregiver for the child and be registered with Health as a family head.

Eligibility for the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will only require that the youth be registered with Saskatchewan Health as a family head. Youth with a dependent child, living at home and part of their parent's social assistance file will not be eligible for the benefit in their own right because they will be registered with Saskatchewan Health as a dependent.

What about children who move from one family to another and children whose parents share custody?

Changes in circumstances will have to be reported to both Revenue Canada (for Canada Child Tax Benefit and Saskatchewan Child Benefit changes) and to Saskatchewan Health (for Saskatchewan Employment Supplement changes) in order that the primary caregiver receives benefits.

The combined Canada Child Tax Benefit and Saskatchewan Child Benefit will be paid to the primary caregiver of the child.

A new caregiver will be expected to apply to Revenue Canada for the child benefit.

A special allowance for the child will only be provided for families on social assistance if the new caregiver has proven that the existing Canada Child Tax Benefit and Saskatchewan Child Benefit payment for the child cannot be accessed.

How will foster care and assisted adoption be affected?

Payments for foster care and assisted adoption will not be affected with the introduction of the new programs.

Will First Nations families qualify for the new programs?

First Nations families who reside on or off reserve will qualify for the Canada Child Tax Benefit. Off reserve First Nations families will qualify for the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Saskatchewan Employment Supplement programs.

Federal officials are currently reviewing the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Saskatchewan Employment Supplement programs to determine if this benefit will be available to on reserve residents.

How will single parents benefit from the new programs?

In Saskatchewan, more than half of all single parent families qualify for welfare at some point in a given year. Currently, about 11,000 single parents rely on social assistance. The new programs will have a particularly positive impact on these and other low income single parents.

The new programs will work to reduce disincentives to work. Extending children's benefits and health benefits beyond welfare as income increases will encourage all families, including single parents, to increase employment income.

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will help all low income parents, including single parents, with child-related work costs. In addition, the supplement will also provide a financial incentive for single parents to increase maintenance income. Fewer than 25% of single parents on welfare receive maintenance. Treating maintenance income in the same fashion as employment income will positively impact on single parents who currently are on the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan and on those who live just above the welfare level.

Will disabled people qualify for the new programs?

Yes, although the new child benefits do not specifically target parents with disabilities and will not be available to single persons or childless couples. However, disabled persons are over represented in the low income population. As a result, broad based changes to reduce child and family poverty will have a positive affect on many parents with disabilities.

Social Services is establishing an Office of Disabilities Issues to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to opportunities and services in Saskatchewan. The Office will work with the disability community on: prevention of disabilities; development of programs and services that limit the impact of disability; identification and reduction of barriers that limit access for the disabled to existing programs; and community/agency/government co-ordination of programs and services.

PREPARED BY: Income Security Programs, Saskatchewan Social Services

DATE PREPARED: June 1, 1998

ACCESS TO NEW PROGRAMS

Who will handle inquiries about the new programs?

For convenience, a Call Centre will be established to provide information about the *Building Independence - Investing in Families* programs. To contact the Call Centre call 1-888-488-6385, or for Regina callers, 787-4723. Call Centre hours, excluding statutory holidays:

March 26, 1998 - May 31, 1998	8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (Monday to Friday)
Effective June 1, 1998	7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. (Monday to Friday) 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (Saturday and Sunday)
Effective June 1, 1998 – Integrated Voice Response (IVR)	7:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m. (7 days per week)

In addition, Revenue Canada has a toll free phone number to respond to inquiries about Saskatchewan Child Benefit and Canada Child Tax Benefit payments.

INCOME AND ASSET CONSIDERATION

What income is considered in calculating the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement?

Under the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement, income definitions have been simplified to allow for ease of program administration. In order to ensure benefits go mainly to families with low total incomes, benefits will be reduced when family income exceeds $1075 per month.

Benefits will be based on gross employment income and all paid maintenance. Gross employment income includes salaries, wages, fees, drawings, realized taxable employment benefits, holiday/vacation pay, bonus, retroactive pay, overtime, shift differential, severance pay, commissions, and tips/gratuities to a maximum of 20% of employment income.

Total family income includes the above plus other information obtained directly from the source of income (Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, Worker's Compensation Board and the Maintenance Enforcement Office).

In total, this income accounts for over 90% of all family income currently received by Saskatchewan Assistance Plan and Family Income Plan families. The remainder of income received will be disregarded in the interest of program simplification and efficiency as well as an interest in providing low income families with an opportunity to stabilize their circumstances.

PREPARED BY: Income Security Programs, Saskatchewan Social Services

DATE PREPARED: June 1, 1998

What income sources are not considered? Why don't you consider these sources?

Examples include investment income, the Provincial Training Allowance, the Provincial Youth Allowance, OAS/GIS, inheritances, lottery winnings, wage replacements such as SGI benefits and mineral/surface rights. These types of incomes are either allowances or windfalls and do not provide an incentive to maximize employment earnings.

Because the definition of income accounts for over 90% of all income, other miscellaneous types of income have been excluded for program simplicity and because of the significant administrative cost of verifying the miscellaneous sources.

How will parents receive the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement on maintenance payments forwarded to the General Revenue Fund (i.e. by assignment)?

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will link by computer to the Maintenance Enforcement Office and identify the amount of maintenance collected and forwarded to the General Revenue Fund by assignment. The supplement will be calculated considering these payments as income in addition to gross employment income.

Parents who receive maintenance payments directly from the non-custodial parent or from the Maintenance Enforcement Office will report this income and their employment income to the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement program by calling the *Building Independence* Call Centre at 1-888-488-6385, or for Regina callers, 787-4723.

Why don't you consider assets in determining eligibility? Doesn't this mean that "rich" people will be able to qualify for the new benefits?

Entitlement for the Saskatchewan Child Benefit will be determined by the previous year's income reported to Revenue Canada. The Saskatchewan Child Benefit payment will be integrated with the federal Canada Child Tax Benefit. The federal system has no asset test because an asset test would add to the cost, complexity and intrusiveness of the benefit system. An asset test may also unfairly discriminate against low income farm families.

The average social assistance recipient or low income family has few, if any, cash or property assets. Families with higher incomes generally have more valuable assets – for the most part, these families won't qualify for the new programs by virtue of their income levels.

ACCOUNTABILITY

How will verification of income work?

Our experience is that the vast majority of low income people are honest and trustworthy and accurately report the income they receive.

Saskatchewan Child Benefit entitlement will be determined by using previous year's income reported to Revenue Canada. Revenue Canada will maintain normal audit procedures for tax filing and information reporting.

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will link by computer to other sources of income information (Human Resource Development Canada for Canada Pension Plan and Employment Insurance, Worker's Compensation and the Maintenance Enforcement Office). By obtaining this information from source, accuracy can be assured. In addition a sampling of cases will be verified to monitor program accuracy and ongoing verification will be maintained for other cases as required.

By providing a supplement to employment and maintenance income, the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement will encourage low income parents to report these incomes as the amount of supplement increases as income rises.

The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan will continue to verify income in the usual manner. The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan program contains extensive controls to monitor abuse of the program.

Will social assistance case workers have access to information on income provided to the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement?

Workers will be able to access Saskatchewan Employment Supplement and Saskatchewan Child Benefit payment information through a new SWIN computer screen.

Where the client has not provided information to the worker or there is a question about the accuracy of the information provided, workers may contact the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement Call Centre for confirmation of income reported.

Who is responsible when the federal cheque is lost or stolen?

The federal government has procedures in place to deal with lost or stolen cheques. Parents with missing cheques are required to complete the appropriate Revenue Canada form. It takes approximately 7 to 10 days for replacement if the missing cheque has not been cashed. If the missing cheque has been cashed an affidavit and other processes are initiated which may take 4-6 weeks.

Parents receiving the new benefits are encouraged to arrange for direct bank deposit to minimize the chance of lost or stolen payments.

Can payments be made to trustees to ensure the new benefits will be spent on children?

The new benefits can not be paid to a third party. The Canada Child Tax Benefit and the Saskatchewan Child Benefit will be paid to the primary caregiver and Saskatchewan Employment Supplement benefits will be paid to the individual who applied.

The expectation is that the money be used for their children's needs - most parents will use the money responsibly for their children's needs. In circumstances where the family is in need of immediate help, the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan will continue to treat this type of situation in the same manner as is done now. Recoverable emergency advances will be considered when necessary.

For families who continue to receive a social assistance supplement, trustee arrangements will continue for the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan benefit if they are required.

Service delivery responses are being developed to ensure that no children are placed at risk with the change to the new system. Social Services is working with trustee agencies to review the services they provide to families. With the introduction of the new programs, some families may no longer require trustee services for family budgeting but may benefit from other services provided by trustee agencies.

How will you ensure that these new benefits will be spent on children?

The expectation is that the money will be used for children's needs or to assist with child-related costs of working. Most parents receiving the new benefits will use the money responsibly as part of their overall family budget.

For those families who might experience difficulty, service delivery responses are being developed to ensure that no children are placed at risk with the change to the new system.

Will the liquid asset exemption change with the introduction of the new programs?

No. The liquid asset exemption will continue to be based on family size including dependent children at the time of application for social assistance.

Who is responsible when Saskatchewan Assistance Plan clients spend their combined children's benefit payment and they don't have enough money to meet their needs?

The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan will continue to treat this type of situation in the same manner as is done now. Emergency advances will be considered when necessary.

Will SAP make up the shortfall when the federal government makes overpayment recoveries from the Canada Child Tax Benefit?

Social assistance benefits will not be issued to make up for federal overpayment recoveries. Persons who experience hardship can call Revenue Canada to request a reduction in the recovery amount.

Will mid-month cheques continue?

The new benefits will mean that low income families will receive benefits at different times during the month. For those who continue on the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan, case workers and clients will work together to develop the best timing for the family's benefits. Mid-month cheques will continue to be available if required.

Will advances for clothing/household items still be available?

In the past, clients could receive an advance of their basic allowance for clothing and/or household needs. Families could receive an advance of up to $500 with a recovery rate of $100 per month; single recipients up to $250 with a recovery rate of $50 per month. The recovery amounts were frequently criticized, by clients and advocates, as being excessive and causing hardship, especially if an overpayment recovery was also being collected.

With the introduction of the Saskatchewan Child Benefit children's basic needs will be removed from the social assistance benefit, and will be paid separately. Thus this portion will not be available for an advance payment. So that families could prepare, the amount of advance has been reduced to $240 and the recovery rates to $40 per month for all clients.

To prevent individual hardship, clients may still request grants for items such as household equipment or furniture if their advance is insufficient to cover the expense. Such requests are reviewed on a case by case basis.

Advances will be not be available for either the Saskatchewan Child Benefit or Saskatchewan Employment Supplement.

Will monthly social assistance overpayment recovery rates be changed?

Yes. The introduction of the Saskatchewan Child Benefit will result in lower social assistance entitlements as the children's basic allowance will no longer be included in the monthly assistance benefit. Monthly overpayment recovery rates will be reduced accordingly.

Will northern residents continue to receive an additional $50 per month per person?

Yes. The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan will continue to provide the Northern Food allowance of $50 per month per person to qualifying northern residents.

What is the Special Allowance for Children and when will it be paid?

The Special Allowance for Children will be available through social assistance to meet children's basic needs when the primary caregiver is not yet receiving the Canada Child Tax Benefit/Saskatchewan Child Benefit payment for the child.

The Special Allowance for Children will provide a maximum payment of $160 per month per child until the Saskatchewan Child Benefit or the provincial Child Benefit adjustment is paid.

An example is a family with a new born child. The processing period for Revenue Canada application and payment will be approximately 2 months. The Special Allowance for Children will be available to provide for the child's basic needs until the Saskatchewan Child Benefit adjustment payment is issued.

Other examples will include families moving to Saskatchewan from out of province, families moving off reserve and custody transfers, where registration for the Canada Child Tax Benefit/Saskatchewan Child Benefit may be required and the Saskatchewan Child Benefit adjustment payment is not pending.

What is the Child Differential Allowance and when will it be paid?

The Child Differential Allowance is a $35 monthly allowance paid through the social assistance program for the first child of a single parent family. Currently, a monthly basic allowance of $195 is provided for the first child of a single parent. With the implementation of the Saskatchewan Child Benefit, the remaining amount of the basic allowance ($160) will be made up by the Canada Child Tax Benefit/Saskatchewan Child Benefit.

What will happen to the Visiting Children's Allowance?

The Visiting Children's Allowance will be paid as a special need, rather than as a basic need and can be provided when children visit a non-custodial parent. This includes situations where children are in care of the Minister. The allowance is provided for each child on a pro-rated basis. The visit must be at least 24 hours in order for the allowance to be paid.

The Visiting Spouse's Allowance will continue to be provided as a basic need.

Will there be any changes to the board and room allowances for families?

The board and room rates will be reduced to remove the children's portion of the board component. The equivalent of the Child Differential Allowance will be included in the board and room allowance for single parents for the first child so they will not experience any reduction in their total resources for their children's basic needs.

How will children's special needs be provided?

The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan will continue to provide for children's housing costs and special need items (ie. school supplies and special diet needs).

If social assistance no longer provides for children's basic allowance, why are you still deducting child maintenance from the social assistance benefit?

With the introduction of the Saskatchewan Child Benefit, the children's basic allowance will no longer be paid as part of the social assistance benefit. However, social assistance will continue to provide for other child-related needs such as childcare, school supplies, special diets, etc. In addition, other allowances such as the family shelter allowance is based on the number of people, including children, in the family unit.

In addition, any Saskatchewan Employment Supplement provided as a result of maintenance income will not be deducted from the social assistance benefit.

Will 18 year olds living in their parent's home and in school that no longer receive the Canada Child Tax Benefit and Saskatchewan Child Benefit automatically come back on to social assistance?

Parents on social assistance should update their family circumstances with their worker. For children turning 18 who live with their parents and are in school, workers will adjust the parent's social assistance file to include the 18 year old as a dependent adult.

What about deferred utility arrears and security deposit guarantees?

Social Services has agreements with Sask Power and Sask Energy to defer utility arrears which accumulate prior to the date of eligibility for assistance. When clients leave the social assistance program, the utility company initiates recovery of the arrears.

Social Services provides letters of guarantee for security deposits to landlords of social assistance tenants.

With the introduction of the new programs, more families, in the long term, will leave social assistance due to the improvement of their financial circumstances. Because these families are no longer eligible for social assistance, they will make their own arrangements with the utility companies and their landlords.

Are Saskatchewan Employment Supplement and Saskatchewan Child Benefit payments considered income when determining eligibility for social assistance?

No. Saskatchewan Employment Supplement and Saskatchewan Child Benefit payments are considered to be exempt for the purposes of determining social assistance eligibility.

What happens to current Children Out of Parental Home (COPH) cases? Will there be any change for COPH cases after August 1, 1998?

Current COPH cases will continue to be assessed and paid as they are now.
For COPH Options 1 and 2 cases, the children are on a social assistance family budget and the family will be assessed no differently than any other family on social assistance. For current COPH Option 3 and 4 cases, a board and room allowance will be paid and the Canada Child Tax Benefit/Saskatchewan Child Benefit payment will be exempted.

Effective August 1, 1998, the basic needs for children, regardless of their living arrangements, should be met through the Canada Child Tax Benefit/Saskatchewan Child Benefit. With the exception of COPH cases active prior to August 1, 1998 there will be no social assistance allowance to provide for a child living out of the parental home. The care giver will be expected to claim the child and qualify for federal children's benefits and the Saskatchewan Child Benefit to meet the child's needs.

PREPARED BY: Income Security Programs, Saskatchewan Social Services

DATE PREPARED: June 1, 1998

Is there a difference between the social assistance program and the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement in terms of which month income is taken into consideration for the calculation of benefits?

Yes, there is a difference. The social assistance program uses net income from the 25th of the previous month to the 24th of the current month. The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement uses the previous month's gross income to determine eligibility for the current month.

Will there be a change in how the social assistance program calculates maintenance income?

There is no change in the assessment of maintenance income in the social assistance program. Maintenance income will continue to be deducted in full from the social assistance benefit.

What will the new wage exemption be for families?

The proposed earned income exemptions to be effective August 1, 1998 are $125 for non-disabled families and $200 for families with disabled wage earners.

CLIENT RIGHTS

Will the province ensure that rights established under the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) are protected?

Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) conditions (as we interpret them) are:

- universal eligibility based on need;
- common criteria for determining financial need;
- commitment to meet basic need;
- no residency requirement;
- access to appeal.

Saskatchewan has not taken any action to reduce or infringe on the rights of people receiving social assistance since the Canada Assistance Plan was dismantled. Redesign will expand client rights by protecting benefit levels, significantly expanding the base of eligibility, and reducing government's discretionary power over family benefits.

PREPARED BY: Income Security Programs, Saskatchewan Social Services

DATE PREPARED: June 1, 1998

Appendix I

"Changing Directions"

Child poverty in Saskatchewan increased significantly over the past fifteen years. The level of child poverty remains unacceptably high today.

The need for incentives to work

There are several aspects of social assistance which can discourage people from working or pursuing independence.

- Some parents can be employed full-time but because of the size of their families may not be financially better off working than receiving social assistance, which can discourage some from seeking employment.

- The social assistance program provides an exemption on a limited amount of earnings but earnings above certain levels are fully deducted from social assistance benefits.

- Social assistance clients are eligible for supplementary health benefits such as dental coverage for children, glasses and prescription drugs. Some families could not afford these additional costs if they went off social assistance.

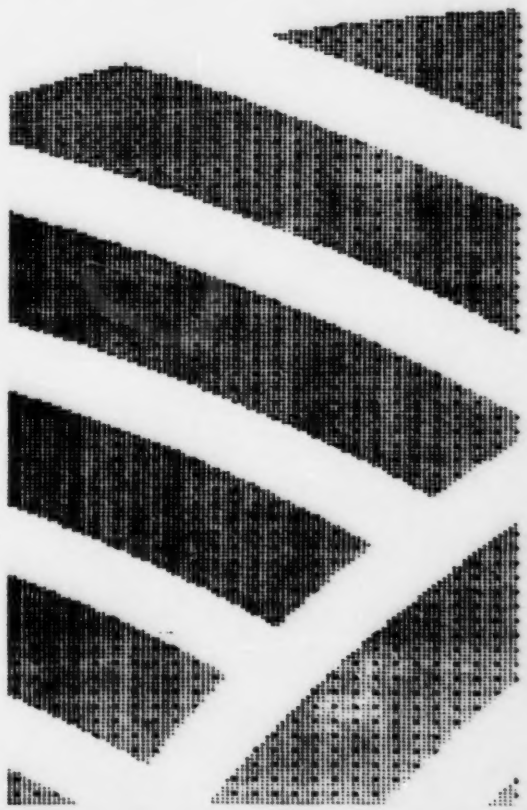
- Child maintenance payments are fully deducted from social assistance benefits so many single parents are reluctant to pursue maintenance from non-custodial parents.

SUMMARY

Social assistance has not provided a way out of poverty nor a transition to sustainable jobs for many recipients, and the cost of social assistance to Saskatchewan taxpayers has increased.

The Saskatchewan government is committed to providing programs, services and support to the province's most vulnerable citizens. It is critical that new ways are found to provide support to individuals, children, youth and families to assist them to move off social assistance and into the workforce. With the federal government cutting back on transfer payments and income support programs, Saskatchewan cannot afford to have social assistance costs increase further. Social assistance must be redesigned to meet the following objectives:

- to protect the most vulnerable;
- to reduce disincentives to work;
- to reduce poverty and its effects;
- to encourage participation in the economic and social life of communities; and
- to simplify administration, reduce administrative costs and enhance accountability.

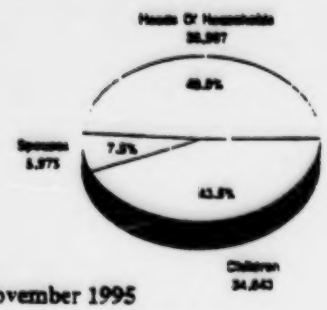


SOCIAL ASSISTANCE IN SASKATCHEWAN — PROPOSALS FOR REDESIGN

Children and families on social assistance

In Saskatchewan, more than 34,000 children depend on social assistance for their daily needs. Children make up almost 44 percent of social assistance recipients. The long-term impacts of poverty on families can be devastating.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS



November 1995

Total = 79,615

Social programs support families and help to protect children from abuse, neglect and hunger. Prevention, support and early intervention have been demonstrated to be effective in avoiding high social and health costs in the future.

Saskatchewan has taken some preventive steps to address child and family poverty through such initiatives as:

- *Saskatchewan's Action Plan for Children*;
- *Prevention and Support Grants*;
- *Integrated School-Linked Services*; and
- the *Child Nutrition and Development Program*.

Benefit levels

In comparison with other provinces, Saskatchewan provides about average social assistance benefits for families. However, these rates are below Statistics Canada's Low Income Cutoff levels which are used by some as a measure of poverty. Parents who work full-time at minimum wage still require social assistance to meet their families' needs and their income is well below the LICO's. A single parent with one or two children would need a job paying about $7 to $8 per hour to meet their basic financial needs and may also have additional child care and health costs. Most people would agree that people should be financially better off working than on social assistance.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE COMPARED WITH LICO'S

	Social Assistance (plus other benefits)	LICO 1994	Shortfall
Single Parent / 1 Child	12,094	14,014	1,920
Couple/ 2 Children	17,448	22,077	4,629

Minimum Wage @ $5.35/hr x 37.5 hours/week average = $10,433/yr.

Proposal: Saskatchewan Child Benefit (SCB)

for low-income families with children to reduce child poverty and make work pay for families receiving assistance.

Description:

The SCB would be in the form of a monthly supplement based on the family's

income and would take basic benefits for children out of welfare. The SCB would also be available to low-income families who do not currently receive social assistance. Families would be able to earn more income before benefits start dropping. Benefits would reduce at a slower rate than under social assistance. This would assist low-income parents to increase their earnings without being penalized.

The SCB would also provide supplementary health coverage for children so that families are able to leave social assistance without losing this coverage. This would prevent families from having to turn to social assistance as a result of health-related expenses for their children.

The working poor

Across this country, an increasing number of families work for wages that are below or just above the poverty line. For many of these families a job loss, a sick child or a family crisis can push them onto social assistance — once there, it is often difficult to become independent again.

This type of financial instability among our most vulnerable citizens affects all Saskatchewan residents. People living in poverty use health care, social services and justice programs at a higher rate than the general population. Due to the size of their families, some low-income working families make less working full-time than they would receive from social assistance.

Like many programs across the country there are disincentives to work built into Saskatchewan's Assistance Plan. Social assistance, by itself, does not help families to become independent or to assist working families to remain independent. Rather, children and families dependent on social assistance can fall into a recurring cycle of dependence.

To help families move off social assistance, the government is looking for ways to reduce or remove disincentives to work and to encourage low-income working families to pursue employment opportunities even if the work is part-time. Income security programs need to ensure that individuals and families have incentives to earn more income. People who are working, even at low wage jobs, contribute to society and gain employment experience which can be used to obtain higher wage jobs.

PROPOSAL
Working Income Supplement (WIS)

to provide a continuous incentive to parents to increase earnings and/ or pursue child maintenance.

Description:

The WIS would provide a monthly supplement to low-income families based on the amount of income they earn and child maintenance they receive. The WIS would top-up wages and maintenance and allow more families to become independent of social assistance. Although social assistance does not deduct every dollar of earnings, the amount retained is too low and does not sufficiently reward parents for working. Also, child maintenance is deducted dollar for dollar under social assistance. The WIS would be an incentive for low income families to earn as much as possible and to pursue maintenance support from non-custodial parents.

Youth and social assistance

Over the last few years the number of youth receiving social assistance has been climbing. Many are not attending school or working. Seventy percent of the youth who receive social assistance today do not have a grade 12 education. Over 30 percent have not finished grade 10.

The labour market and economy are demanding that workers be well educated and highly skilled. It is important that youth have a good education and work experience to assist them in moving off social assistance and establishing their independence.

Many youth would prefer to be working but, because of limited skills, education and employment opportunities, are unable to find jobs. If youth do not begin to gain work experience and become part of the workforce, it is unlikely they will have stable employment. Reliance on social assistance at an early age can lead to long-term dependency. Youth who are on their own and receiving social assistance can also become disconnected from the important support that families can provide. As a growing number of youth become dependent on the program, it is increasingly important to find a way to help them get an education or develop needed job skills.

PROPOSAL:
Youth Futures Program

to ensure youth under age 22 are involved in productive activities and remain connected with their families.

Description:

Youth Futures would take a new approach to providing services to youth. It would emphasize connection with family and the importance of education and work or community service experience. Parents would be considered the first resource for youth who require financial support. Financial assistance would be issued to youth only when their families are unable to provide financially for them or in circumstances of family breakdown. Youth would be required to re-enter school, accept a work experience or training placement, participate in community service work, or combine school or work with community service.

OTHER PROPOSALS

Provincial Training Allowance

for people sponsored in provincial training programs

Description:

Presently persons involved in provincial training programs remain on social assistance for basic living needs or receive sponsorship through the Vocational Rehabilitation for Disabled Persons or the Non-Status Indian and Metis program. The amount of financial assistance received can vary from one program to another. The Provincial Training Allowance would provide a monthly allowance based on family size to allow persons involved in training programs to move off social assistance. This would simplify administration by combining programs. Trainees would be required to maintain attendance in order to receive the training allowance.

Child Maintenance

to assist with and provide an incentive to pursue child maintenance

Description:

Child maintenance is an important resource for single parent families and helps in alleviating child poverty. The Government wants to assist clients in obtaining child maintenance orders to reinforce the responsibility of non-custodial parents for their children and to reduce the number of single-parent families who are dependent on social assistance. Further, the Working Income Supplement described earlier would provide an incentive to pursue maintenance support since these monies would be supplemented.

Accountability

would be strengthened by further ensuring that social assistance is provided to only those who have no other resources.

Description:

Taxpayers want to provide a safety net but also want to ensure that only those who truly need assistance receive this help. The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan has developed a broad range of measures to protect against fraud and abuse. These offer some of the most comprehensive and effective measures in Canada while maintaining the respect and dignity of persons in need.

In recent years, the following additional steps have been taken:

- hiring of 30 verification workers to monitor accuracy of information;
- computer matching with other provinces to prevent duplication of payments; and
- enhanced collection of overpayments.

Annual audits have demonstrated that most clients are honest and that the program is operating within acceptable limits of financial error. Accountability would be further strengthened through computer matching (Revenue Canada, Canada Pension Plan, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada), and expanded interprovincial matching.

CONCLUSION

Saskatchewan has a tradition of innovation in social policy and these proposals, if implemented, would continue that tradition. Many provinces have drastically reduced financial benefits and tightened eligibility rules to control costs. Saskatchewan believes there are ways to redesign social assistance that do not punish those who need help.

With a redesigned system such as proposed:

- no family would have to rely on social assistance for their childrens basic needs;
- low-income working families would have an incentive to earn as much as possible;
- youth would be involved in productive activities such as education or work experience;
- all persons attending training would receive the same level of financial help based on family size and administration of these funds would be simplified; and
- the number of individuals and families who are dependent on social assistance would drop over time and the cost of the social assistance program would be reduced.

The Saskatchewan government accepts the challenge to rebuild social assistance so that it meets the needs of all of us as we head into the 21st century. For redesign to work, we have to build it together. We would like to hear your ideas and suggestions.

SURVEY

A survey has been provided with this discussion paper (on page 15).

If you have any ideas, suggestions or concerns, or if you agree with this strategy, please fill out the survey form, detatch it from this document, and return it by January 31, 1996 to your local Social Services office or mail it to:

Saskatchewan Social Services
Communications
1920 Broad Street
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4P 3V6

Appendix "J"

"Northern Dialogue Steering Committee Process"

This

Memorandum of Understanding

In the Implementation of the

Northern Strategy

Between

The Government of Saskatchewan
Represented by
The Premier of Saskatchewan
The Minister of Northern Affairs

And

The Meadow Lake Tribal Council

And

The Metis Nation of Saskatchewan

And

New North

And

The Prince Albert Grand Council Albert Grand Council

including

The Denesuline First Nations of
Black Lake

And

Fond du Lac

And

Hatchet Lake

PREAMBLE:

WHEREAS the Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding have engaged in a Northern Dialogue to identify and to plan the effective address of the needs and priorities of the people of northern Saskatchewan, and to ensure the participation of Northerners in the development of a long-term Northern Strategy for development of the North;

WHEREAS the Northern Dialogue Steering Committee has prepared a Background Paper which recommends a Northern Strategy to achieve equity in Northern Saskatchewan, in terms of employment and income, relative to Southern Saskatchewan;

WHEREAS the continued participation of northern municipalities, First Nations and the Metis Nation is critical to the implementation and success of the Northern Strategy;

WHEREAS the provincial government has ongoing responsibility for the development and implementation of policies and programs in support of a Northern Strategy; and

WHEREAS the support and involvement of the federal government is necessary for northern development and particularly for enhanced northern economic development and diversification, which is a cornerstone of the Northern Strategy as hereinafter defined by its Vision, Principles, Goals and essential Enabling Mechanisms;

NOW THEREFORE the Parties agree as follows:

VISION:

The Parties share the following vision of the Northern Strategy's benefits for the North and its people:

The people of northern Saskatchewan will possess the means to address the goals and aspirations they have for their communities, their families and themselves. With respect for northern people, their cultures and traditions, government will work as an active partner with communities, Aboriginal authorities, business and industry to promote the social and economic development of the North.

PRINCIPLES:

The Parties consider the following principles to be fundamental to achieving their vision:

- Northern solutions for northern problems;
- Partnerships and cooperative approaches;
- Community governance and self-reliance;
- Self-sufficiency and sustainability;
- Equitable treatment of regions and communities in Northern Saskatchewan;
- Capacity-building; and
- Accountability.

GOALS:

The Parties agree to work together to pursue the following goals in order to achieve equity in Northern Saskatchewan, in terms of employment and income, relative to Southern Saskatchewan:

- A strengthened and diversified northern economy, creating jobs and business opportunities;
- Enhanced community and regional infrastructure, facilitating economic development and improved northern living conditions;
- Strengthened education and training in the North, enabling Northerners to pursue further academic goals and to be more competitive in the labour market in northern Saskatchewan and elsewhere;
- Increased community self-reliance and northern leadership; and
- Increased participation by Northerners in protecting the northern environment and managing its resources.

ENABLING MECHANISMS

The Parties agree that joint action in the establishment of the following mechanisms is necessary to fully meet the vision, principles and goals of this Northern Strategy in response to the Northern Dialogue Steering Committee Working Paper which is appended as a framework for this Memorandum of Understanding.

Northern Development Board

The Parties will create, without delay, in interim or in final form as they may agree, and will sustain their participation in, for the duration of the term of existence of a Canada-Saskatchewan Northern Development Agreement, and any renewals that may be made thereof, a Northern Development Board to oversee the implementation of a Canada-Saskatchewan Northern Development Agreement, a Strategic Opportunities Assessment process and any other initiatives upon which the Parties may agree and that are related to the implementation of the Northern Strategy.

Canada-Saskatchewan Northern Development Agreement

The Government of Saskatchewan will, with the assistance, as required, of other signatories to this Memorandum, approach the federal government without delay to negotiate a five-year Canada-Saskatchewan Northern Development Agreement as a mechanism by which the Government of Canada would co-fund and participate in northern social and economic development.

Strategic Opportunities Assessment

The Government of Saskatchewan will, without delay and in anticipation of the Government of Canada's participation and with the support of northern signatories to this Memorandum, commence work toward a comprehensive Strategic Opportunities Assessment of the potential for development of various sectors of the northern economy.

OTHER AGREEMENTS

The commitments within this Memorandum of Understanding are not intended to conflict with, or to detract from, existing agreements among or between any of the Parties, nor any existing agreements between the Parties and the federal government.

GENERAL

This Memorandum of Understanding is not intended to create binding legal obligations nor will it be used in the interpretation of any other agreement.

The Prince Albert Grand Council, the Meadow Lake Tribal Council and the Government of Saskatchewan acknowledge that this mutual commitment to, and partnership in, northern development, recognizes First Nations' Treaty and citizenship rights and obligations within the Province of Saskatchewan and is without prejudice to the Treaty, Constitutional and Fiduciary obligations of Canada to the First Nations.

The Metis Nation of Saskatchewan and the Government of Saskatchewan acknowledge that this mutual commitment to, and partnership in, northern development, recognizes the Aboriginal rights of the Metis and their citizenship rights and obligations within the Province of Saskatchewan and is without prejudice to the Constitutional and Fiduciary obligations of Canada to the Metis.

Other parties may become Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding upon the consent of the signatories.

The terms of this Memorandum shall be amendable by consent of the Parties.

AND IN WITNESS WHEREOF the Premier of Saskatchewan, the Minister of Saskatchewan Northern Affairs, and the Representatives of the Black Lake First Nation, the Fond du Lac First Nation and the Hatchet Lake First Nation, in good faith and with a commitment to fulfillment of all aspects of the Memorandum of Understanding, have set their hands on this 18th day of June, 1998 to this Memorandum of Understanding, as amended from its earlier May 20, 1998 form, the consent to these amendments of all other Parties to the May 20, 1998 Memorandum of Understanding is evidenced by the letters of consent appended hereto and forming part of this document.

The Signatories:

Premier of Saskatchewan

In the Presence of:

Witness

Minister
Saskatchewan Northern Affairs

Witness

Representative
Meadow Lake Tribal Council

Witness

Representative
Metis Nation of Saskatchewan

Witness

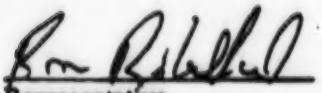
Representative
New North

Witness

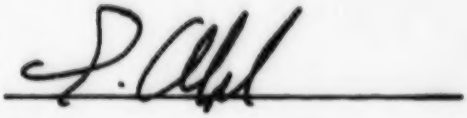
Representative
Prince Albert Grand Council

Witness

Including



Representative
Black Lake First Nation



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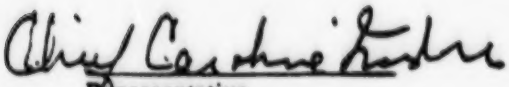
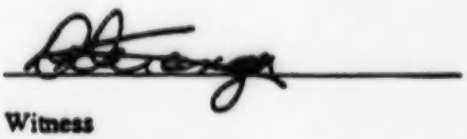


Representative
Fond du Lac First Nation



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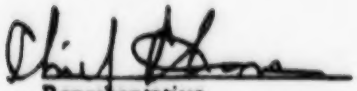


Representative
Hatchet Lake First Nation

Witness

Consent and Agreement:

I hereby consent and agree, this 18th day of June, 1998 to the terms of the revised Northern Strategy Memorandum of Understanding, dated June 18, 1998, as detailed in and attached to this letter of request for consent:

CHIEF Elmer Jr
on behalf of Meadow Lake Tribal Council

Please deliver or fax (306-425-4349) to Ray McKay at 306-425-4349.

Consent and Agreement:

I hereby consent and agree, this 17th day of June, 1998 to the terms of the revised Northern Strategy Memorandum of Understanding, dated June 18, 1998, as detailed in and attached to this letter of request for consent:

Al Rivard

on behalf of Metis Nation of Saskatchewan

Please deliver or fax (306-425-4349) to Ray McKay at 306-425-4349.

Consent and Agreement:

I hereby consent and agree, this 16th day of June, 1998 to the terms of the revised Northern Strategy Memorandum of Understanding, dated June 18, 1998, as detailed in and attached to this letter of request for consent:

on behalf of New North

Please deliver or fax (306-425-4349) to Ray McKay at 306-425-4349.

Consent and Agreement:

I hereby consent and agree, this 16 day of June, 1998 to the terms of the revised Northern Strategy Memorandum of Understanding, dated June 18, 1998, as detailed in and attached to this letter of request for consent:

on behalf of Prince Albert Grand Council

Please deliver or fax (306-425-4349) to Ray McKay at 306-425-4349.

A NORTHERN STRATEGY
responding to the
DIALOGUE WITH NORTHERN LEADERS

A. VISION:

The people of northern Saskatchewan will possess the means to address the goals and aspirations they have for their communities, their families and themselves. With respect for northern people, their cultures and traditions, government will work as an active partner with communities, Aboriginal authorities, business and industry to promote the social and economic development of the North.

B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. DEVELOPING A STRONGER AND MORE DIVERSIFIED NORTHERN ECONOMY, CREATING JOBS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

- develop the potential of northern economic sectors
- establish partnerships among governments, communities and industry to promote economic growth and diversification
- increase northern participation in, and benefits from, economic development activities (e.g. forestry, tourism, mining)
- strengthen northern businesses' access to financial and business support services
- enhance northern entrepreneurs' ability to provide goods and services to industry and the public sector

2. ENHANCING COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE THAT WILL ASSIST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVE NORTHERN LIVING CONDITIONS

- improve transportation, energy and communication services

- improve municipal and community services such as sewer and water, land use planning and zoning, health and recreation facilities
- increase the availability of adequate housing and support the further development of housing markets

3. **STRENGTHENING EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE NORTH; ENABLING NORTHERNERS TO PURSUE FURTHER ACADEMIC GOALS AND TO BETTER COMPETE IN THE LABOUR MARKET, BOTH IN THE NORTH AND BEYOND**
   - expand educational approaches to improve school retention and completion rates
   - strengthen adult education and literacy programs to improve the labour market opportunities for mature northerners
   - improve access to training programs to gain skills and practical experience
   - improve entrance rates to post-secondary institutions

4. **INCREASING COMMUNITY SELF-RELIANCE AND ENHANCING NORTHERNERS' OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN, AND PROVIDE LEADERSHIP FOR, NORTHERN INSTITUTIONS**
   - enhance child development programs
   - increase participation of northerners in public service employment
   - improve access to information, training, administrative and technical expertise to better develop organizational skills and foster community development
   - facilitate the delivery of justice initiatives that respond to northern cultures and support community and social development
   - work with communities to lessen dependence on social assistance

5. **INCREASING NORTHERNERS' PARTICIPATION IN THE PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE NORTH**
   - strengthen the research and communication services of the Environmental Quality Committees
   - develop and apply, with northerners, new models of co-management in administering northern resources

- work with northerners to build expertise in reclamation of abandoned resource development sites
- in partnership with northerners, undertake reforestation of non-renewed forest harvest areas
- restoration of species' habitats to ensure Northerners' ability to continue practising traditional lifestyles, while also contributing to new opportunities for economic diversification (e.g. ecotourism)

C. PROPOSED NEW ENABLING MECHANISMS (IN ADDITION TO EXISTING FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL PROGRAMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES) TO HELP ACHIEVE THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES ASSESSMENT

- analysis of each sector of the northern economy to determine where public and private investment will achieve self-supporting economic diversification and job creation
- $150,000 1998-99 provincial budget allocation to immediately begin the process, building on existing information and undertaken with the Interim Northern Development Board.
- additional funds to be determined for work in 1999-2000, to ensure assessments are complete within 18 months

2. CANADA-SASKATCHEWAN NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

- a multi-year cost-shared investment in economic development and diversification, targeted to commence April 1999
- consideration of an "equity investment" vehicle
- associated investment in infrastructure and "capacity building" that will facilitate economic diversification and opportunities for employment and business development by northern people
- based on input from the Interim Northern Development Board, the Province will initiate discussions with the federal government immediately

3. NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT BOARD

- a twelve-person board, created and funded under the Northern Development Agreement, to oversee the Strategic Opportunities Assessment and the Agreement
- two members named by each of the: Metis Nation, New North, Prince Albert Grand Council, Meadow Lake Tribal Council, Saskatchewan and Canada
- in co-operation with the Northern Dialogue Steering Committee, the Province will create an Interim Northern Development Board, pending federal agreement to establish the proposed Board under the Canada-Saskatchewan Northern Development Agreement.

Government of
Saskatchewan

May 20, 1998

Appendix "K"

Pinehouse Lake Keyano Healing

Concept

Kiyanow Healing Lodge

Our Aboriginal Wholistic Treatment Progra

Gift: Meditation → thinking (Brain Power)
A) Plan, organize, compromise, develop, implement →
1. Mental
Wisdom - where you learn, educate people
B) Love, accept, trust, give, take
Gift: Reason → describing, feeling
2. Spiritual
Power Planner - sees ahead
3. Physical
Builder - the gatherer
C) Awareness starts in each person, the rest will follow
Gift: Action → doing
4. Emotional
Love - Leader
D) If we accept what we see → love, trust, accept →
Gift: Vision → seeing
Me

Prepared by the people of the Northern Village of Pinehouse

We sustained ourselves and maintained our health on the basis traditional cultural values. These included living in har with our environment, community responsibility for our mem and personal loving, sharing and caring relationships.

The late 1940's and through the 1960's, the church and federal and provincial governments decided that our children receive a school education if the economic circumstances of people were to change. We recognize that the concern of t outside agencies was based on humanitarian attitudes and va and was supported by a public who believed that nort Aboriginal people must be assisted to adapt to the ways of south if our living circumstances were to "Improve". Government of Canada decided to invoke provisions in the Fa Allowance Act, which allowed it to withhold the family allowa if our children did not attend school. The province promise a school and health care facility if our people would move the central community. We were also provided with assistance to build new homes and offered social assist (welfare) if we moved to this central location. The church actively encouraged and put pressure on our local area resid to move into this central area.

As a result, as in other northern communities, we gradu resettled in the central community. There were several b flaws in this well meaning policy. Firstly, we were moved the status of being independent to the status of depende Although our elders continued to trap, hunt, fish and berry-p the process became more difficult for them because of distances to where their traditional harvesting operations place. The development of a culture of dependency took sev generations but in time our youth no longer possessed or lea the self-survival skills from our elders. As a consequence, community has lost its cultural and aboriginal values that based on the spiritual and physical link to our land and resources.

Secondly, no serious efforts were even undertaken to develo alternate local economy and way of life to provide for our n schooled youth. As a result, the purpose of formal education us was at best obscure. What was taught in school was relevant to the circumstances of our community and did not the knowledge and skill needs of our people. Also, most of youth did not take school seriously and dropped out as soo they could. Many of the drop outs had not acquired basic sk in reading, writing and mathematics.

Our Aboriginal community had traditionally been a place w people cared for each other, shared when needed, supported other and where the learning the necessary survival skills place by example. Using a current concept we can characte the learning as taking place on the job and being reinforce positive support from our elders.

SUMMARY OF HOW IT WAS:

In the past twenty years, our community has gone through one of the most difficult periods in history. Until about the 1960's and even most of the 1970's, Pinehouse was relatively isolated and cut off from the outside world. Indeed before 1970, we had no roads, no T.V., no RCMP, no telephones and for the most part the shift to a cash economy had not really taken hold. In those days we would do traditional activities together such as go commercial fishing together.

After 1977 the health of our community took a turn for the worse. Many more of our people began drinking until there was hardly a sober person over the age of 15 living in the community. A single house couldn't be passed without stopping for a drink of something(usually "Chipewegees" or home brew). Our local economy was supplemented with alcohol instead of money. We had a rapid increase in the number of suicides and suicide attempts. As well, a marked increase in the levels of interpersonal violences, as well as physical and sexual abuse.

Our community of Pinehouse was *branded* by the CBC as the "Northern drinking capital of Saskatchewan". Alcohol was only the symptom, the deeper problem was economic and political in nature. Our way of life had been taken from us. None of us really understood what was happening until it was too late. Some of the contributing factors included the following:

- the introduction of the Department of Northern Services, with its orientation to southern models and a cash economy.
- the loss of the fur trade due in part at least to Green Peace activities, with nothing to replace it.
- the influx of roads and easier contact with the outside world.
- northern access to education and training was limited. Hence, no jobs.
- jobs that did exist were mostly artificial - make work.
- University of Regina C.D. support team planted the idea that all outside resources are "the enemy", all bureaucrats and politicians are also "the enemy". So who should the community trust for help? Very little development occurred for about ten years due to this thinking. Today there are about 1050 people and about 150 full-time and seasonal jobs.
- if a person wasn't drinking and in their own bubble of persona. isolation, they weren't "anywhere". The community pulled almost everyone who tried to get out, back into the soup
- the politics of the past was that a few people controlled everything. Most people did not have a voice or the power to influence change. So volunteerism died.
- Dependency thinking and a collective inferiority complex made it hard for new initiatives to get started.

b) From Health to Dysfunction

Our role of the community gradually changed from a heal supportive environment to a place where the traditional r models and ways of support gave way to negative and destruct behavior. The result of well meaning but misguided governm policies were unhealthy, dependently, hopeless, frustrating numbing idleness. In a very real sense, there was no reason our existence. The result was a gradual change of traditional Aboriginal culture and of traditional social val from being supportive to a healthy life style to becom destructive and non-supportive. In particular, we ceased to b positive example to others and accepted no responsibility for care of others. What happened to our community best illustra the fact that good intentions do not result in good policy. G policy results when our local peoples needs are understood. must be partners in policy development and have a key role program delivery if results are to meet our community's ne that are based on traditional spiritual and cultural growth.

We lost control over our lives when our self-esteem, pride dignity was torn from us. A result was the gradual addiction our people. The traditional addiction was alcohol but transportation improved, other drug related addictions follow The consequence has been family and community violence, ch abuse, family breakups, delinquent and criminal behavi physical and mental health problems and increased levels dependency.

Some of our people continued to hunt, trap, fish and gather meet their own needs and to provide income in kind. Many have government jobs, service sector jobs and mining and fores jobs, while others work at seasonal construction and maintenan A few also grow, gather and market wild rice. Although a numb of promises regarding economic development have been made politicians over the years, meaningful development has b limited. In addition, our population has tripled since 1 1950's. With the perception of limited resources, outs agencies have convinced us that the aboriginal lifestyle can continue.

c) The Traditional Community Ways

Aboriginal communities traditionally approached life and livi from a wholistic understanding of our environment. We were pa of, not separate from, other life and the environment in which lived. Our needs for food, shelter, clothing, good health, go social relationships, based on cultural spiritual values, we not divided into separate compartments, they were all a part the life style. Trapping, hunting and gathering were pursued meet physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs th resulted in accessing food, shelter and clothing.

However, the sharing and helping of each other met social and communal needs as well. The exercise, hard work, fresh air and healthy environment contributed to our good health.

Likewise, the community was seen as a wholistic entity. It was not traditionally divided up into little organizational compartments where each part competed for our attention and where it was not obvious how the parts fitted together to make a community. Aboriginal communities had traditionally not distinguished between community needs and the needs of its members as being separate. They were part of the whole life style of the people. The purpose of the community was to show love, to care, to share, to support and to provide healthy outlets for the social and creative needs of the people.

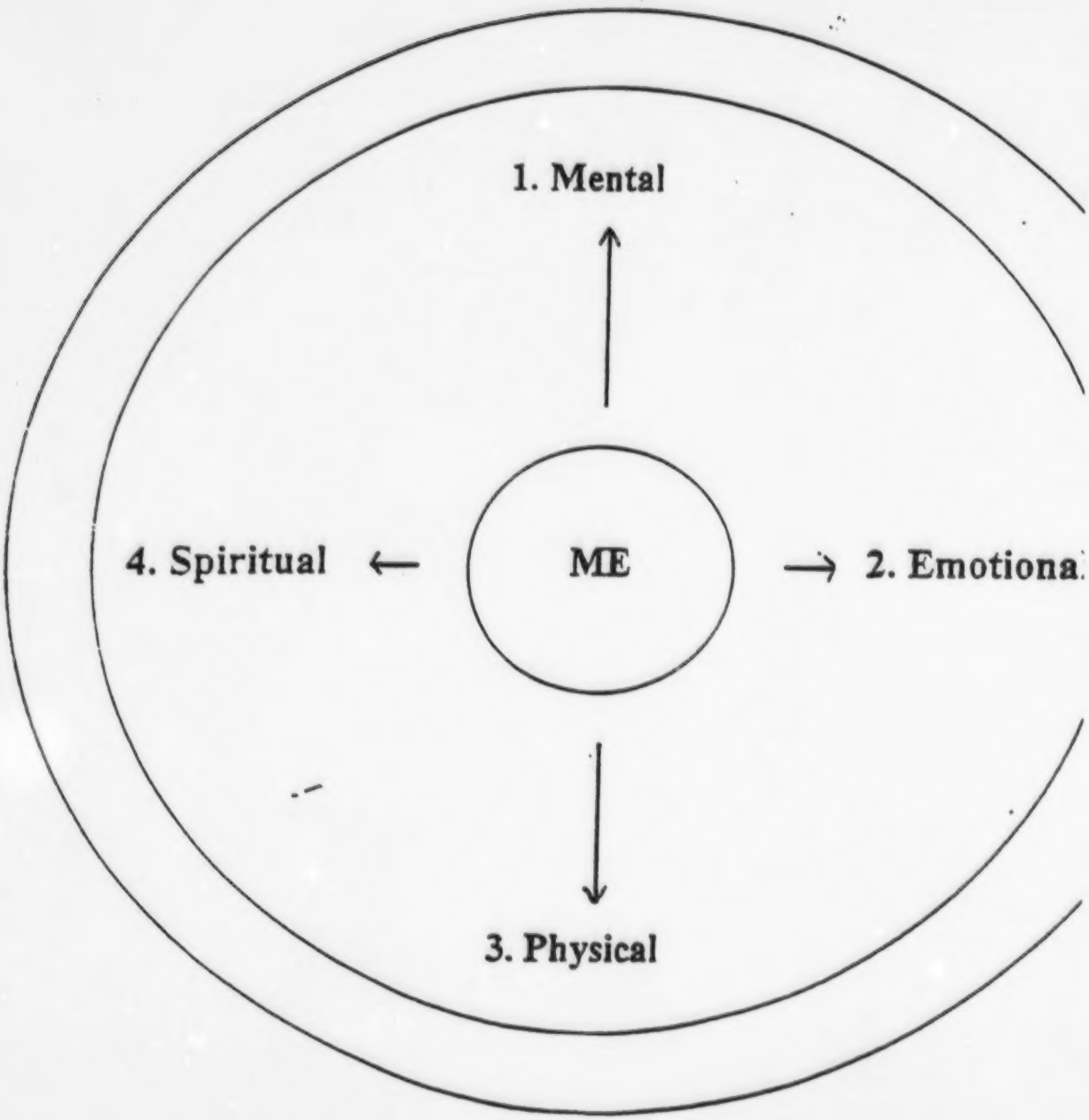
d) <u>The Outside Agents</u>

Outside agencies usually from the south attempted to introduce new ways to us. The governments had a standardized way of dealing with programs and services which they attempted to impose on the north. The most active period of outside intrusion into our community was the period of the 1970's and 1980's when the government through the Department of Northern Saskatchewan(DNS) introduced us to a structured village council, a recreation board, a Northern Lights School board, and committees dealing with health, social services and economic development, to name a few. In total there are currently some 15 local functioning boards and committees.

Each program or service has its separate legal mandate and there seems to be limited or no coordination of program initiative and no model for integrating these in a wholistic way at the local level. This proliferation and confusion of structures and programs only served to further alienate our community and our people. Instead of helping, this approach has only contributed to the dysfunction of the community and the alienation of our people.

KIYANOW HEALING LODGE

Our Aboriginal Wholistic Treatment Program



e) Community Awakening

As is the case with addicted individuals, communities also have to hit "bottom", so to speak, before local people undertake serious efforts to deal with the community's problems and the needs of it's members. Also as with individuals, the community's decision and resolve to change the local circumstances must come from within. In the past several years, we have reached the decision that we ourselves must do something about our community's problems.

As is so often the case, the decision was to return to the traditional cultural roots and seek traditional methods to solve problems. The traditional method of dealing with community problems was to focus on "healing". The traditional understanding has been that, as the body could be healed, so could personal and community relationships. The second focus was on "community responsibility". The community was responsible for all of it's members, not only in a caring sense but to encourage and support individuals to live according to the accepted values and rules of the traditional community.

Community needs must again be approached using a wholistic mode rather than a piece meal model. To achieve this focus, we developed an Inter-agency concept and structure. Individual boards and agencies came together and we established a Working Committee. At this level, we share information, plan joint initiatives and we indentify gaps in services and planned for where possible. This Working Committee is not a legal organization however, it is recognized by the community of Pinehouse.

HOW IT IS NOW:

It is important to map out what life is really like in Pinehouse now: the good, the bad and the uncertain. Some of the reasons for this are as follows:

1. In order to make real long-range improvements, an inventory has to be taken of what the actual conditions are now.
2. In order to evaluate the effect that the Recovery Lake program has had on Pinehouse, it is important to look at the whole community. It is critical that we see the impact of Recovery Lake not only as isolated phenomena but as important parts of an organic whole.

There are many obstacles that have effected the health and well being of Pinehouse in the past few years. The overall effect comes from the combination of everything that is happening.

We have organized the information in the following categories.

What is life like now:
1. for children?
2. for youth?
3. for adults?
4. for elders?

What is happening now in the:
1. political
2. economic
3. social, and
4. cultural

life of the communi

CHILDREN:

- the current generation of children are second generation welfare children who are the offspring of children of dysfunctional families.
- the education system is "uncoordinated" for them.
- children are introduced into a negative environment.
- the children are experiencing a confused outlook on the futu
- parents do realize that children need love, education, bondi with family and community.
- all children are everyone's responsiblity

YOUTH:

- during youth is the most troublesome age in Pinehouse.
- the system gives confusing messages to the youth. For examp A) Don't get pregnant until you are married; versus B) The c way you can get a house is if you are a mother(ie. family wi dependent children) so kids must have kids to get a house. A) Stay in school; versus B) Be loyal to community and famil Kids must choose between community and school because they h to leave the community to do grades eleven and twelve. Most choose to drop out.
- we have about 600 children and youth.
- no serious drug problem yet.
- very few non-drinkers over the age of fourteen years of age. 90% drink.
- very few future employment prospects so youth see no economi future for themselves. So why try to stay in school?
- late teens and early 20's group in serious need of affectio and direction.
- Pinehouse kids are very open and usually responsible as wel fun.
- some youth services are available along with some recreatio programs and some minor sports.
- after dark, the youth "own the streets".

ADULTS:

- local initiatives was the key into the Recovery Lake program.
- this group participates in the Recovery Lake Program.
- job opportunities are more possible for this group because more often they are educated through grades 10, 11 and 12 and many are sober.
- there is real courtesy within this age group.
- this group has slowed down in their drinking from six month binges to weekend parties.

ELDERS:

- not too many drinking
- this group could be called "the forgotten group".
- trappers have lost their occupation due to disruption in lifestyle.
- no jobs.
- often these people don't speak good English or not at all.
- this group has not been receptive to Recovery Lake. They say they "like what we do" but they don't participate themselves.
- can't see a future for themselves.
- feeling lonely, left out and useless.
- a few elders are being abused.
- Recovery Lake is more a community support building mechanism than it is an "alcohol program". This could be a missing piece for our elders so they could feel a part of the community.

ECONOMIC:

- bright economic future now seems possible due to openness and cooperation generated through the Recovery Lake process.
- the jealousy is not so apparent, so individuals can now take economic initiatives without being pulled back down.
- people are seeing that social services(ie. welfare) is not a bright future.
- competition is being replaced by cooperation.
- Provincial resources are now more receptive to northern owned/operated enterprises.
- northern leaders are committed to Northern regional economic development.

SOCIAL:

- there is a stillness: no obvious activity to generate social development.
- no consistent long term strategy for social development.
- people get along. The atmosphere is "friendly" but not dynamic. It is not a growing atmosphere. No social development movement.

CULTURAL/SPIRITUAL:
- Pinehouse is "very Cree".
- Cree language is dominant.
- lots of people feel connected to the bush.
- people are "Pinehouse" first - not Metis, Cree or White.
- group competitive spirit is strong.
- spirituality is very present.
- conflict is created when social problems of the community become a topic of discussion . There's not enough unity of minds and hearts in spiritual matters.
- though spirituality is important, people can't seem to apply it to everyday life and to getting along with each other.
- no define link between spiritual and culture.

POLITICAL:
- leaders are expected to do everything. The people off-load their responsibility onto the leaders.
- Recovery Lake is helping some people realize they could step forward and participate in community affairs.
- there is no community forum to really talk about important issues.

f) Dealing with Addictions

A variety of approaches to treating the addictions of local people have been tried. These have included institutional treatment and counselling, AA programs, and the Four Worlds program developed by Indians in Alberta. None of these programs produced any significant changes in the behavior of our local people. Most people who went through and completed these programs, returned to the negative community environment and returned to their addictions. We concluded that the attempts at treating addictions using accepted approaches for Non-Aboriginal people were not relevant to the Aboriginal ways and culture.

A few people led by Leonard McCallum got together to discuss the community problems and to see if they could come up with an approach which would work. Their idea was based on the traditional Aboriginal values of living in harmony with our environment, community caring, sharing and encouraging, and supporting community members rather than controlling and punishing them for not living by accepted community values. The idea of a healing community emerged. It was recognized that our people of Pinehouse had a very negative self-image and low self esteem. The need was identified for a program which would assist our people develop a positive self-image and high self-esteem.

The second need recognized was for our people to once again become a community by taking responsibility for each other and encouraging each other to uphold our community values and to conduct our lives based on these spiritual and cultural values.

KIYANOW HEALING LODGE

Our Aboriginal Wholistic Treatment Program

Beginning personal adventures
from brokenness to giftedness
using a wholistic program that
deals with all aspects of life.
Reaching out, grasping growing
inner strengths to healing
mentally, emotionally, physically,
and spiritually.
Creating doors that will open
to journeys beginning,
but to journeys never
ending.

g) The Recovery Lake Project - What Action Is Required to Build A Positive Future:

A small lake 15 km from Pinehouse was selected as the site for the Recovery Lake Project. It was decided to use a temporary camp and a tent community for the project. The founding group enlisted the assistance of community elders to provide a program based on the healing concept. The first group with Leonard McCallum both as a leader and participant went to live at the lake for one month in the summer of 1987. The program was voluntary for those seeking healing and all care-givers were volunteers. Since that first group retreat at Recovery Lake, 16 more retreats have been held involving a total of 270 people. Each group stays at the camp for one month.

All of the activities carried out at Recovery Lake have been delivered on a voluntary basis. Some local fundraising and donations were provided for some program needs which could not be supplied through volunteer efforts. As well, Leonard McCallum was encouraged to approach the Metis Addictions Council for some funding to enable him to provide for his family's support needs while he devoted his time to the Recovery Lake Project. He received $500 a month in salary from MACSI for a period of three months. This is the only funding received to date which could be identified as support for the project from funding provided through government channels. Leonard McCallum, elders from the community and individuals who have been through the program function as a core of concerned community persons who support each other. They also provide friendship and examples of a healthy life style for more recent graduates from the program. The community group as well act as a community support system encouraging each other and other graduates to conduct themselves according to accepted Aboriginal values of the community.

Appendix "L"

"Virtues 2000 Concept Paper"

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May 26. 1998

The Virtues Community Development Project Task Force
Flin Flon, Manitoba

Dear Friends,
Flin Flon may be the first community to offer a model of a Virtues Community Development Project. The world is yearning for moral and spiritual principles to inform our life as a society and influence the raising of healthy children and the healing of families and communities. It is time to heal the past and create a future which is based on courage, honor, justice, love, compassion and tolerance. It is time to be purposeful and to make this happen. We have the power if we work in unity.

As co-founders of The Virtues Project, my husband and I have traveled throughout the world responding to requests by communities of many cultures to apply the strategies of our project to heal communities. We have been seeking one community to serve as a model.

There are several factors which make Flin Flon a candidate for successfully launching the first Virtues Community Development Project. One is the leadership of Virtues Project facilitator Heather Acres who is a woman of reverence and of deep respect for all people. Another is that Flin Flon has a history of excellent initatives having won an international award in 1996 for its Healthy Communities Initiative. The third is the participation of Dennis Ballard, Bertha Hutcheson, Fred Hines, Cyndi Pedwell, Janet Modler, Marlene Gregory, Kathleen Woodward, Cathy Hynes Rick Butts and Michelle Richard. They and the others who will join them provide a wide spectrum of representation from the community. This is the necessary foundation for the success of such a project.

May this be just the beginning. It would be wonderful to have the first fully developed VCDP right here in Canada!

Warm regards,

Linda Kavelin Popov
President

The Virtues Project Inc.
Box 240, Ganges Post Office, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2V9 Canada

VIRTUES 2000 & Beyond

Bringing the Best out of our Children & our Community!

Project Proposal Summary

Healthy Flin Flon, Creighton Denare Beach Wellness Venture and The Virtues Project, Inc. have formed a partnership to launch a three year pilot project in the Precambrian Edge Region. Our mission is:

Dedicated to bringing the best out of our children & our community through implementing The Virtues Project™ into all sectors of our community.

The Virtues Project™ is an international program designed to bring out the best in people with simple strategies to help them to live by their highest values. It is being applied in more than 85 countries throughout the world. It was honoured as a model global program for families of all cultures by the United Nations Secretariat during the International Year of the Family.

It is based on the universal teachings of the virtues - qualities such as respect, determination, loyalty, compassion, generosity, kindness, responsibility, etc. The program focuses on 52 virtues which are revered by all cultures of the world. Through simple and creative ways, The Virtues Project™ is being applied around the world in a variety of settings such as schools, corporations, health and addiction programs, parenting classes, retreats, families and personal lives.

Linda Kavelin Popov & Dr. Dan Popov, founders of this international program, have been travelling the world, looking for communities to serve as a model - one which will integrate The Virtues Project™ into all sectors of the community. Flin Flon, Creighton and Denare Beach are jointly taking this challenge through a three year pilot project called VIRTUES 2000 & Beyond. Following community integration of The Virtues Project™ teachings, it will be evaluated, documented and showcased internationally.

VIRTUES 2000 & Beyond consists of a diverse community representation and

receives input from the founders of The Virtues Project™ through ongoing communication by telephone, mail and e-mail.

VIRTUES 2000 & Beyond has developed a vision and a strategy that provides for full community integration of The Virtues Project™.

The integration strategy includes:

Infrastructure Development - establishment of a committee, program manager, summer student and volunteer positions, office and a funding base.

Provision of Training and Workshop Sessions - for parents, caregivers, educators, corporate members and volunteers.

Establishment of a Supportive Resource Base - through the development of support/brainstorming groups, library resources, media promotion, and the development of materials such as posters and brochures.

Evaluation - through pre and post testing with surveys and interviews.

Documentation - through the development of a web-site and through publication of results for local, regional, national and international audiences.

Showcase the Results - through the international network of The Virtues Project™ and other provincial, national and international networks that are interested in developing higher moral character in their communities.

Through the three-way partnership, the VIRTUES 2000 & Beyond Committee will hire a part time program manager who is both a Community Development Expert and a Certified Virtues Project Facilitator. The manager, with the help of summer students and volunteers will carry out the strategic plan.

Funding for this ground-breaking initiative will come from a variety of sources that include local service groups, provincial and federal governments.